THE

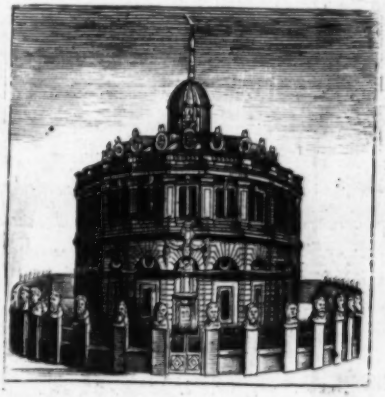
Ladies Calling

IN TWO PARTS.

By the Author of the WHOLE DUTY OF MAN, &c.

The Fourth Impreſsion.

Favor is deceitful, and Beauty is vain: but a Woman that feareth the Lord ſhe ſhall be praiſed, PROV. 31. 30.



At the THEATER in OXFORD.

M. DC. LXXVI.

THE

EDITOR TO THE READER.

IT is a popular reproch uſually caſt upon writers in morality, and perſwaders to devotion, that while they with pompous words repreſent virtue as a ſufficient reward to her ſelf, and exhort to the contemt of Glory; they prefix their names to their labors, and make the Title-page a confutation of the Book that follows it.

Our Author has effectually averted this objection, having bin ſo far from ſeeking a name from others, as not to have left a poſſibility for the diſcovery of his own: but like the river *Nilus*, that gives fertility and bleſſing whereſoe're he paſſes, hides his head; and permits himſelf to be only known in the benefits which he diſpenſes.

By what methods the other moſt uſeful works of this excellent Author have ſtoln themſelves into the world, I am not enabl'd to relate, but having bin made a party to the publication of this preſent, it may be expected that I render ſome account thereof. For altho the curioſity of enquiring into that which is induſtrioufly conceled, be ſuch a rude-

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neſs, and injuſtice alſo, as by no means deſerves to be incouraged; yet where a benefit has bin receiv'd, for thoſe who are oblig'd to deſire to acquaint themſelves with the Perſon unto whom they ſtand indebted, that they may pay a reſpect at leaſt, if they can reach at no more equal retribution, this has ſuch a pretence to gratitude, as may juſtly demand to be conſidered. And it will be ſome ſatisfaction to the ingenious enquirer, that tho he have not inform'd himſelf in the particulars which he deſires, he has not bin deficient in the inqueſt, and knows as much as is poſſible.

The Reader therefore may pleaſe to underſtand, that ſomwhat more then two months ſince, I receiv'd a Letter, accompanied with a roll of Papers, opening the which, I found it was written by a hand which I was utterly a ſtranger to, and that had no name ſubſcribed, the purport whereof was as follows.

SIR,

THE general report of your candor perſwades me you will not reject an addreſs tho from an unknown hand, which encourages me to the ſending theſe Papers to you, with a deſire you would pleaſe to peruſe them, and commit them either to the Preſs or the Fire as you find them worthy. I ſhall not need to tell you who I am, for if my ſuit be accepted, I have what I deſire with-

without it: if it be not, tis my interest you should not know who tis that has thus importun'd you. Your Charity I assure my self will at a venture pardon

SIR,

Your humble Servant.

'Twill be superfluous to say how much I was surpriz'd with this so unusual address, how much affected with the singular modesty and humility which it exprest: and after all how much transported upon viewing the Treasure, which was thus a s from the Clouds dropt into my hands. Nor was I long to determin which of the two waies of disposal proposed unto me, was to be made use of: and indeed I should much sooner have perform'd my trust, and taken care that this excellent Tract had immediatly seen the light, had it not bin needful to transcribe the whole, before it could safely be committed to the Press.

This I mention not only to excuse the delay of the Edition, but more especially to beg a pardon for the misadventures of it. It being not easie in a written Copy, where a recourse is not to be had unto the Author, to do him justice, and avoid faileurs and mistakes: which in the present instance was the more hazardous, in that every departure from the Authors inimitable pattern, would certainly be for the worse.

But

But Excuſe and complement are any where a very inſipid fooliſh thing, and moſt intolerable in a ſerious concern: I ſhall not therefore ſay ought that looks that way, only offer a ſhort requeſt, which I ſuppoſe will be equally in the behalf of the Author of this Tract, the Editor, and the Readers of it. Which is, that who ever takes this Book in hand, would ſeriouſly conſider it, and doing ſo, receive the infinite benefits of uniform vertue, and ſincere piety, the documents whereof are here with all poſſible advantages propos'd: and thereby give the Author that greateſt of Bleſſings, the being an inſtrument to the eternal happineſs of ſouls: and as to us who deal in the affair of Printing, afford ſome ſhare in this moſt deſirable event, abſolving us from the charge of having don miſchief, inſtead of ſervice to the world. For, to ſay the truth, no book is ſo fatally deſtructive as that which convinces of duty, but fails of perſwading to it. But if the beſt books can do harm, twill certainly be difficult to make a plea for the multitudes of a contrary kind, which now eſpecially uſurp upon the Age.

THE

THE PREFACE.

THO the ſmalneſs of this Tract will ſcarce juſtifie the ſolemnity of a Preface; yet remembring 'tis deſign'd for thoſe who are accuſtomed to Ceremonious Addreſſes, I think it not beſt to approch them too abruptly. And indeed beſides the Civility, there ſeems ſome uſe of it in order to my deſign. To adviſe, or reprove, is ſo ungrateful an Office, that he that undertakes it, had need uſe all previous

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arts to vindicate the ſincerity of his purpoſe, and to convince the perſon admoniſhed, that 'tis neither ſpleen nor prejudice, but the moſt real exuberant kindneſs which promts him to inflict thoſe wounds of a friend, *Prov.* 27. 6. *and that is never leſs* an enemy, then when he thus tells them the truth, *Gal.* 4. 16. *Therefore, tho they may in the enſuing leaves meet with ſome things which may have a ſhew of ſeverity, yet let me aſſure my Reader, they have indeed a deſign of the greateſt ſervice, by correcting the extravagance of ſome, to reſcue the whole Sex, as from the contagion of the example, ſo from the community of the blame. For ſuch is either the inadvertence, or malice of a great part of mankind, that (againſt all Rules of Diſcourſe) they deduce Generals from particulars, make every woman ſo far an Eve, that her depravation ſhall forfeit her whole kind; and becauſe there are fooliſh and ſcandalous women,*

women, will ſcarce allow there are any other.

The truth is, the Error ſeems in many Men to be affected; they propoſe to themſelves unworthy ends on Women, and make all their obſervations wholly in order to thoſe. He that is upon a baſe purſuit, takes particular notice of all that he thinks for his turn; the reſt fall not within his Sphere: and 'tis too probable he is ſo abundantly ſupplied for that abſolute conſideration, that he never deſcends to the comparative. Nay, perhaps there may be yet a deeper Original of the ſcandal: the World is much governed by eſtimation; and as Applauſe encourages and exalts, ſo an univerſal Contemt debaſes and dejects the Spirit. If it can once paſs into a Maxim, that Women are ſuch ſilly or vicious Creatures, it may put fair for the making them ſo indeed. Themſelves may imbibe the common Opinion, charge all their Perſonal Faults on their Sex, think that they do but their kind, when indeed they moſt contradict

it, and no more aſpire to any thing worthy, then a man can pretend to the Excellencies of an Angel. And indeed this ſeems to be the practical inference of ſome Women, who could hardly have deſcended to ſuch Diſhonours, had they not before bin as vile in their own Eies, as they have afterwards rendred themſelves in others.

It may therefore upon this account be a neceſſary Charity to the Sex, to acquaint them with their own Value, animate them to ſome higher thoughts of themſelves; not to yield their Suffrage to thoſe injurious Eſtimates the World hath made of them, and from a ſuppoſed Incapacity of Nobler Things, to neglect the purſuit of them; from which God and Nature have no more precluded the Feminine, than the Maſculine part of Mankind.

In reference to Secular Conſiderations, their advantages are moſt important; Women have a very powerful Influence upon all

all ſorts of Tranſactions in the World: the engaging of the Delilah, *and* plowing with the Heifer, *Judg.* 14. *and* 16. *being ever the ſureſt way to undermine the Counſels, and maſter the Force of the Stouteſt* Samſon. *And accordingly Hiſtories of all kinds aſſure us that the* Gyneceum *has ſtill had a Rival Suffrage with the Senate. I might urge the more regular Powers which appertain unto that Sex; that all Mankind is the Pupil and Diſciple of Female-Inſtitution: the Daughters till they write Women, and the Sons till the firſt ſeven years be paſt; the time when the Mind is moſt ductile, and prepar'd to receive impreſſion, being wholly in the Care and Conduct of the Mother. And whereas 'tis obſerv'd by* Ariſtotle *in his Politics, (and is a proof of his being as Wiſe, as he was a Learned Man) that the Eſtate of Republics entirely hangs on private Families, the little Monarchies both compoſing and giving Law unto the great; 'tis evi-*

dent that the disposal of Families and all domestic Concerns therein lies chiefly on the Wife; whence the same Aristotle *declares, that the Spartans notwithstanding their ready Address to Empire by their great Frugality, Industry, and military Virtue, could have but half a Happiness, as failing on the part of their Wives. But waving these reflexions, I shall fix only on the Personal Accomplishments of the Sex, and peculiarly that which is the most principal Endowment of the Rational Nature, I mean their Understanding. Where first it will be a little hard to pronounce, that they are naturally inferior to men; when 'tis consider'd how much of extrinsic weight is put in the ballance to turn it on the Mens side. Men have their parts cultivated and improved by Education, refined and subtilized by Learning and Arts, are like an inclosed piece of a Common, which by Industry and Husbandry becomes a different thing from the rest, tho the natural Turf*

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own'd no ſuch inequality. And truly had Women the ſame Advantage, I dare not ſay but they would make as good returns of it; ſome of thoſe few that have bin tried, have bin eminent in ſeveral parts of Learning. To omit the modern inſtances, Theano *after the death of* Pythagoras *kept up his Schole;* Socrates *confeſſes himſelf to have bin inſtructed not only in Rhetoric by* Aſpatia, *but even in the higheſt Points of Philoſophy by* Diotime. *The Roman Story informs us of the deep wiſdom of* Tanaquil, Cornelia, Livia, *to paſs by others. And were we ſure they would have ballaſt to their ſails, have humility enough to poize them againſt the vanity of Learning, I ſee not why they might not more frequently be intruſted with it; for if they could be ſecured againſt this weed, doubtleſs the ſoil is rich enough to bear a good crop. But not to oppoſe a received opinion, let it be admitted, that in reſpect of their intellects they are*

below

below men ; yet ſure in the ſublimeſt part of humanity, they are their equals : they have ſouls of as divine an Original, as endleſs a Duration, and as capable of infinit Beatitude. That ſpiritual Eſſence, that ray of Divinity owns no diſtinction of Sexes ; ſo that in this ſenſe alſo, that Aphoriſm of the Apoſtle holds good, there is neither Male nor Female, bnt all are one, *Gal.* 3. 28. *And ſure this is the one tranſcendent Excellency of Human Nature. For alas, what value can comparatively be ſet upon all other Qualifications, which will finally leave us but like the* Beaſts *that periſh. And this, as it is the higheſt pitch of their worth, ſo it is the ſafeſt ſubject of their Contemplations : other Knowledg, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks,* 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. may puff up, this only will edify.

As therefore when we would pride our ſelves, we uſe not to boaſt our meaner, but our beſt qualities : ſo let me ſolicite Ladies to be ſo juſt to themſelves, as not to take their

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own meſures by any thing below this. Why ſhould they take ſo low a level of Greatneſs, *as to value themſelves upon a title which is but a bigger blaſt of air, when they may derive their deſcent from above the Stars, claim cognation with Divinity? Why ſhould they dote on the fictitious image of a perhaps more fictitious beauty, which their glaſs preſents them, when they need but look inward to ſee an infinitely fairer Idea, an emanation of the eternal* Brightneſs? *Indeed did they make a juſt eſtimate of themſelves in this reſpect, it would overwhelm the vanity of thoſe inferior things wherein they now have ſuch complacency, nor would they ſuffer their nobler part to be affronted by the unequal competition of their meaner.*

But *there is alſo another conſequent which would flow from that eſteem; they would ſolicitouſly preſerve what they ſo highly prize, it being natural for us to proportion our care to our value. They would be*

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jealouſly vigilant againſt every thing, that might eclipſe the radiancy, or contaminate the purity of their ſouls. Twas the advice of a Heathen moraliſt, Revere thy ſelf; *and 'twas very wholeſom counſel: for next our due veneration to* God, *a reverence to our ſelves is the moſt ſeverer controler of all exorbitancies. How can a ſoul that remembers its celeſtial extraction, wallow it ſelf in the mire, ſtoop to any ſordid degenerous practices? Tis ſaid of* Themiſtocles, *that ſeeing once a rich booty about the dead corpſes of his enemies, he toucht it not, but pointing to another, ſaid, Take thou that, for thou art not Themiſtocles. If then a little military fame could ſo elevate his thoughts, tis a ſhame that any who carry an immortal ſpirit about them, ſhould not be raiſed above all the contemtible baits of this ſublunary world. Why ſhould they not with the like diſdain turn over all ſenſual inordinances to meer Animals, and creatures that have no higher principle then*

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that of ſenſe, whilſt themſelves ſoar up to thoſe more ſublimated pleſures, which are at Gods Right Hand for evermore, *Pſal.* 16. 12.

We may therefore conclude, that what ever vicious impotence Women are under, it is acquired, not natural; nor derived from any illiberality of Gods, but from the ill managery of his bounty. He has placed within them a Pillar of Cloud and Fire, ſufficient to ſhelter and conduct them thro all the ſtorms, all the intricacies that can occur in their journey to Canaan; *if they will forget that more intrinſic part of their being, live as if they were all body, reject the Manna, and rave after the Quails, that deſtruction which will thereby be induced they muſt own to ſpring from themſelves. Let them not charge God fooliſhly, or think that by making them women, he neceſſitated them to be proud, or wanton, vain, or peeviſh; ſince 'tis manifeſt he made them to better purpoſes, was not par-*

tial to the other Sex, but that having, as the Prophet ſpeaks, abundance of ſpirit, *Mal.* 2. *he equally diſpenc'd it, and gave the feebleſt woman as large and capacious a ſoul as that of the Greateſt Heroe.*

Nay give me leave to ſay farther, that as to an Eternal well-being, he ſeems to have placed them in more advantagious circumſtances then he has don men. He has implanted in them ſom native propenſions, which (as I ſhall hereafter have occaſion to obſerve) do much facilitate the operations of Grace upon them. Beſides, there are many temtations to which men are expoſed that are out of their road. How hard is it for a man to converſe in the World, but he ſhall be importun'd to debauchery and exceſs, muſt forfeit his ſobriety to maintain the reputation of a ſociable Perſon? Again, how liable are they by a promiſcuous converſation among variety of humors, to meet with affronts, which the Maxims of Honor will tell them, muſt (in ſpight of all Chriſts

Christs interdicts) be reveng'd? And this engages them in Quarrels, somtimes in Murders. Now none of these are incident to women: they must in these and som other instances attaque temtation, violently ravish guilt, and abandon their Sex, the whole Oeconomy of their estate, ere they can divest themselves of their innocency. So that God seems in many particulars to have closelier fenced them in, and not left them to those wilder excursions for which the customary liberties of the other Sex afford a more open way. In short, they have so many advantages towards Vertue, that tho the Philosopher made it one of his solemn acknowledgments to God, that he had made him a man, not a woman: yet I think Christian women have now reason enough to invert that form, and to thank God that he made them women, and not men.

But we know advantages which are only in speculation, are lookt on with som diffidence, till there have bin som practical expe-

riment made of them; I ſhall therefore evidence the problem by demonſtration, and inſtance; deſiring my Readers to meſure the poſſibilities of their arriving to eminent degrees of Vertue and Piety, by what others have attained to. I ſhall not fetch examples of Morality from Heathen Women, becauſe I am now upon an higher ſtrain; yet many ſuch might be brought to the reproch of many Women, who pretending to more, fall infinitly ſhort of that: 'tis Chriſtian Vertue that I am now recommending, and which has bin eminently exemplified in many of their Sex. How many Women do we read of in the Goſpel, who in all the duties of aſſiduous attendance on Chriſt, liberalities of love and reſpect, nay even in zeal and courage, ſurpaſſed even the Apoſtles themſelves? We find his Croſs ſurrounded, his Paſſion celebrated, by the avowed tears and lamentations of devout Women, when the moſt ſanguine of his Diſciples had denied, yea forſwore, and all had

had forſaken him. Nay, even Death it ſelf could not extinguiſh their love; we find the devout Maries *deſigning a laborious, chargeable, and perhaps hazardous reſpect to his Corps. And accordingly, 'tis a memorable atteſtation Chriſt gives to their* Piety, *by making them the firſt witneſſes of his Reſurrection, the prime Evangeliſts to proclaim thoſe glad Tidings; and as a Learned man ſpeaks, Apoſtles to the Apoſtles. Nor is the devotion of that Sex to be found only in the ſacred Records; the* Primitive *times have left us many Memorials of the like, and the Martyrologies are full of Female ſufferers of all ages and conditions who by the fervor of their Zeal had overcome the timorouſneſs of their Nature, and wearied the cruelty of their Perſecutors. And as Women helpt to augment the number of Martyrs, ſo did they of Confeſſors alſo, in a ſtout owning, and diligent practice of Chriſtianity. Queens and Empreſſes knew then no Title ſo* Glorious *as that*

that of a nurſing Mother to the Church, have often exchanged their Palaces for little Cels and Oratories, and valued not their own Diadems in compariſon with their Saviors Crown of Thorns. And tho by a perpetual declination from that priſtine Zeal, the inſtances have in every Age grown leſs numerous, yet none has wanted ſome very illuſtrious Examples. Nay even in our dregs of time, in this common decay of all good, there are, I doubt not, many who (according to their opportunities) tranſcribe the former Copies, live like people that know they muſt live hereafter, and preſent us yet with ſome ſpecimen of ancient Vertue. Nay, to ſpeak an impartial Truth, 'tis not to be denied, but the reputation of Religion is more kept up by women then men, many of the one countenancing it by their Practice, whereas more of the other do not only neglect, but decry it. And now ſince Women are compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of Witneſſes, who by doing

ing the thing, give the ſureſt evidence that 'tis not unfeaſible, why ſhould any plead an impoſſibility? In matter of Vanity and Pomp they are not ſo eaſily diſheartned, no pattern of that kind can be ſet which will not be induſtriouſly imitated; nay in the greateſt inequality of materials for it. Why then ſhould their emulation leave them where only it could do them good? How comes it, that of thoſe who have equal Principles of a ſpiritual Being, ſome live according to the Dignity of it; and others who ſee them do ſo, do yet live as if they aſſented to that Philoſophers Paradox, *who ſaid Women had no ſouls; or at leaſt were of the* Pythagorean Sect, *and lookt upon themſelves only as the Jails and* Priſons *of former offending* Spirits, *which they reſolved to fit for a yet viler tranſmigration; give them the appetites of* Beaſts *before they aſſume the* Bodies. *This is indeed an unlucky* Humility, *that thoſe who in all other inſtances are apt*

to

to overween, ſhould here ſink ſo much below themſelves. And I hope 'twill not appear an uncivil addreſs, to perſwade them to a juſter eſtimate of their own worth. And if what has bin ſaid to that end may have any effect, I ſhall not deſire a better Preparation *to the enſuing Tract; ſince ſhe that duly conſiders her own capacity of Eternal* Bliſs, *and withall, the poſſibility of as Endleſs a miſery, according as ſhe performs or neglects the ſeveral* Parts of Duty, *will ſure need no other incentive to the diligent purſuit of it.*

THE

THE LADIES CALLING.

PART. I. SECT. I.

Of Modesty.

1. IT is now many years since an Addres was made to the Gentry of this Nation, to persuade them to that Vertue which would be both their Pleasure and Reward. I cannot, I confess, boast any such Effect of that, as should much inspirit the hopes of a new Attemt; yet since we see in our proper secular Concerns, Defeats do many times animate no less then Success, I know not why in this more charitable Design I should sit down discouraged. Men usually raise not

a Siege upon the firſt repulſe, but reinforce their Batteries, obſerve more curiouſly which are the moſt aſſailable, acceſſible parts, and accordingly diſpoſe their Aſſault: it will then be no unreaſonable imitation in the preſent caſe, if after a ſucceſsleſs Attemt upon the more impregnable Maſculine part of the Gentry, I now eſſay the Feminine, whoſe native Softneſs and Gentleneſs may render them leſs apt for that reſiſtance of good Counſel, wherein too many Men place their Gallantry.

2. I preſume thoſe to whom that little Tract was at firſt deſign'd, will be ſo willing to relinquiſh their Title, that I might without imputation of Robbery, exchange my Patrons, and by a new Dedication ſuperſede the labor of a new Book. And indeed, ſince what was there ſaid was founded more on the diſtinction of Qualities then of Sex, there would not need many razures to render it as proper for the one as the other; and I ſhall take ſo much advantage of it, as to aſſure the Female Gentry, that they may there find much of the Duty incumbent on them, in reſpect of that Rank and Condition they hold in the World: and therefore, tho I ſhall ſomtimes make ſome reflexions on it; yet as to the main, I ſhall think it the eaſieſt courſe, as well for them as my ſelf, to direct them thither.

3. But it may ſeem to have too much of the

the Pedant, to entertain new Scholars only with the caſt or nauſeated learning of the old; and when I remember I write to Ladies, who uſe to think the newneſs of any thing a conſiderable Addition to its value; I conceive my ſelf oblig'd as well in Civility to their humor, as charity to their needs, to give them ſomething which they may own as their peculiar. And to render it the more unalienable, I ſhall affix it to their Sex; and make it the Subject of my preſent inquiſition, what in reſpect of that are the proper and diſtinct Obligations, under which, by the aſſignment of God and Nature, they are placed.

4 THAT the Obligation to Moral and Chriſtian Vertues is in it ſelf univerſal, and not confin'd to any Sex or Perſon, is not to be denied: yet, as in human Conſtitutions there are often Precepts, which (tho not excluſive of any, do yet) more peculiarly and eminently level at ſome particular Rank or Order of Men; ſo in the Laws of God and Nature, there appears the like diſtinction. That All-wiſe Creator, who hath put peculiar Proprieties and Inclinations into his Creatures, hath accordingly deſign'd their actuating and improving them: and altho in mankind, which differs not in ſpecies but in gender, the variety may ſeem leſs; yet there is ſtill enough to found ſome diverſity, either in the kind or degree of duty. This ſure is ſhadowed to us in that particular

caution given to the Jews, not to confound the habit of the ſeveral Sexes, *Deut.* 22. 5. and yet more clearly evinced in the Precept which the Apoſtles addreſs to women, 1 *Tim.* 2. and 1 *Pet.* 3. Nay, this is ſo granted a Truth, that all Ages and Nations have made ſom diſtinction between Maſculine and Feminine Vertues, Nature having not only given a diſtinction as to the Beauties of their outward Form, but alſo in their very mold and conſtitution implanted peculiar Aptneſſes and Proprieties of Mind, which accordingly vary the meſure of Decency; that being comely for the one Sex, which often is not (at leaſt in the ſame degree) for the other. It will therefore be no abſurd attemt, to decipher thoſe Excellencies, which are the genuine and proper Ornaments of Women: which tho in ſom inſtances they may perhaps prove coincident with thoſe of Men; yet even thoſe which are equally incluſive of both, by the Divine command may have ſom additional weight on the Female ſide, in reſpect of Decency, Fame, or ſom other (not deſpicable) conſideration.

5. FOR the better directing our preſent Inquiſition, it will be moſt regular, firſt to inquire what thoſe Vertues are which are univerſally neceſſary to Women in all Ages and circumſtances of their lives: ſuch which, like the firſt matter, are prerequir'd for all forms; which,

which, like a firm and ſolid Baſis, muſt ſupport all various Events, all changes of their Condition or Relations. And ſecondly, we ſhall conſider them in thoſe changes; track them thro the ſeveral Stages and Periods of Life, thro thoſe ſeveral States which create the moſt conſiderable mutations to them; and in each of thoſe conſider what are the new and proportionate Acceſſions of Duty.

6. As in the outward Accommodations of Life, the things of moſt daily and indiſpenſible uſe deſerve the greateſt Value, ſo in Moral or Divine Endowments, the benefit of poſſeſſing is beſt meſured by the miſery of wanting them. This firſt rank therefore of Female Vertues which we are to treat of, will have that to recommend them; they being ſo ſtrictly neceſſary, that their abſence is not only a privative ill, but alſo expoſes to a deluge of all poſitive miſchiefs conſequent to that privation.

7. This will be found true in all the ſeverals we are to paſs thro, but in none more eminently that in that we ſhall chuſe to begin with, the Vertue of Modeſty; which may be conſidered in a double notion, the one as it is oppoſed to Boldneſs and Indecency, the other to Lightneſs and Wantonneſs. In the firſt Acception *Zeno* has not ill defin'd it, to be *the Science of Decent Motion*, it being that which guides and regulates the whole Behavior, checks

checks and controles all rude exorbitancies, and is the great Civilizer of Converſations. It is indeed a Vertu of a general influence; do's not only ballaſt the mind with ſober and humble thoughts of ones ſelf, but alſo ſteers every part of the outward frame. It appears in the face in calm and meek looks, where it ſo impreſſes it ſelf, that it ſeems thence to have acquir'd the name of Shamefac'dneſs. Certainly, (whatever the modern opinion is) there is nothing gives a greater luſter to a Feminine Beauty: ſo that St. *Paul* ſeems not ill to have conſulted their Concerns in that Point, when he ſubſtitutes that as a ſuppletory Ornament to *the deckings of Gold and Pearl and coſtly Array*, 1 *Tim.* 2. But I fear this will be now thought too antiquated a dreſs, and an Apoſtle be eſteemed no competent Judg in this Science; which is now become ſo ſolemn a thing, that certainly no Academy in the World can vie numbers with the Students of this Myſtery. Yet when they have ſtrein'd their Art to the higheſt Pitch, an innocent Modeſty, and native ſimplicity of Look, ſhall eclipſe their Glaring Splendor, and triumph over their Artificial Handſomneſs: on the other ſide, let a Woman be decked with all the embelliſhments of Art, nay and care of Nature too, yet if Boldneſs be to be read in her Face, it blots all the lines of Beauty, is like a cloud over the Sun, intercepts the view of all that

was

was otherwiſe Amiable, and renders its blackneſs the more obſervable, by being plac'd near ſomwhat that was apt to attract the eies.

8. BUT Modeſty confines not it ſelf to the Face, ſhe is there only in ſhadow and effigie: but is in life and motion in the words, whence ſhe baniſhes all Indecency and Rudeneſs, all inſolent Vauntings, and ſupercilious Diſdains, and what ever elſe may render a Perſon troubleſome, or ridiculous to the Company. Nor do's ſhe only refine the Language, but ſhe tunes it too, modulates the tone and accent, admits no unhandſom earneſtneſs, or loudneſs of Diſcourſe, the latter whereof was thought ſo undecent in *Carneades*, (tho in his public Lectures) that the Gymnaſiarch reproved him for it. And ſure if 'twere not allowable in a Philoſopher in his Schole, 'twill leſs become a woman in ordinary converſe; and if we conſult *Prov.* 7. 11. and 9. we ſhall find loudneſs and clamor in women coupled with ſuch other Epithets, as will ſurely not much recommend it. A womans tongue ſhould indeed be like the imaginary Muſic of the Spheres, ſweet and charming, but not to be heard at diſtance.

9. AND as Modeſty preſcribes the manner, ſo it do's alſo the meſure of ſpeaking; reſtrains all exceſſive talkativeneſs, a fault incident to none but the bold; the monopolizing of Diſcourſe

courſe being one of the greateſt aſſumings imaginable, and ſo rude an impoſing upon the company, that there can ſcarce be a greater indecency in converſation. This is ingeniouſly expreſt by our Divine Poet *Herbert*,

A Civil Gueſt,
Will no more talk all, then eat all the Feaſt.

He that ingroſſes the talk, enforces ſilence upon the reſt, and ſo is preſumed to look on them only as his Auditors and Pupils, whilſt he magiſteriouſly dictates to them: which gave occaſion to *Socrates* to ſay, *It is arrogance to ſpeak all, and to be willing to hear nothing.* It is indeed univerſally an inſolent unbecoming thing, but moſt peculiarly ſo in a woman.

10. THE ancient Romans thought it ſo much ſo, that they allowed not that Sex to ſpeak publicly, tho it were in their own neceſſary defence; inſomuch that when *Ameſia* ſtood forth to plead her own cauſe in the Senate, they lookt on it as ſo prodigious a thing, that they ſent to conſult the Oracle what it portended to the State. And tho theſe firſt ſeverities were ſoon loſt in the ſucceſſes of that Empire, *Valerius Maximus* could find but two more, whoſe either neceſſity or impudence, perſwaded them to repete this unhandſom attemt.

11. AND this great indecency of Loquacity in Women, I am willing to hope is the reaſon

ſon why that Sex is ſo generally charged with it; not that they are guilty, but that when they are, it appears ſo unhandſom, as makes it the more eminent and remarkable. Whether it were from that ungracefulneſs of the thing, or from the propenſion Women have to it, I ſhall not determin; but we find the Apoſtle very earneſt in his cautions againſt it, 1 *Cor.* 14. 35. He expreſly enjoins Women to *keep ſilence in the Church*, where he affirms it is a ſhame for them to ſpeak: and tho this ſeems only reſtrain'd to the Eccleſiaſtical Aſſemblies, yet even ſo it reaches home to the gifted Women of our Age, who take upon them to be Teachers; whereas he allowed them not to ſpeak in the Church, no not in order to learning, tho a more modeſt deſign then that of teaching. But beſides this, he has a more indefinite preſcription of ſilence to Women, 1 *Tim.* 2. 11. *Let women learn in ſilence*; and again, v. 12. *to be in ſilence.* The Apoſtle ſeems to ground the Phraſe, not only on the inferiority of the woman in regard of the creation and firſt ſin, v. 13, 14. but alſo on the preſumtion that they needed inſtruction, towards which ſilence has alwaies bin reckoned an indiſpenſable qualification, the introductory precept in all Scholes, as that wherein all attention is founded. If ſome women of our Age think they have out-gon that novice ſtate the Apoſtle ſuppoſes, and want no teaching; I muſt

crave leave to believe, they want that very firſt Principle which ſhould ſet them to learn, *viz*, the knowledg of their own ignorance: a ſcience which ſo grows with ſtudy and conſideration, that *Socrates* after a long life ſpent in purſuit of wiſdom, gave this as the ſum of his learning, *This only I know, that I know nothing.* This proficiency ſeems much wanting to our female Talkers, who, in this, ſeem to confute the common Maxim, and give what they have not, by making their ignorance viſible to others, tho it be undiſcernable to themſelves: and to ſuch we may not unfitly apply the Sarcaſm of *Zeno* to a talkative Youth; *their ears are faln into their tongue.*

12. BUT beſides this aſſuming ſort of talkativeneſs, there is another uſually charged upon the Sex, a meer chatting, pratling humor, which maintains it ſelf at the coſt of their neighbors, and can never want ſupplies as long as there is any b dy within the reach of their obſervation. This I would fain hope is moſt the vice of the vulgar ſort of Women, the education of the Nobler ſetting them above thoſe mean entertainments. Yet when 'tis remembred that St. *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 13. makes Tatling the effect of Idleneſs, it may not unreaſonably be feared, that where there is moſt of the Cauſe, there will be ſome of the Effect. And indeed it would puzzle one to conjecture, how that

that round of formal Viſits among Perſons of Quality ſhould be kept up without this. That their Viſits ſhould be only a dumb Shew, none will ſuſpect among women; and when the unfaſhionable themes of houſewifery, Piety, &c. are excluded, there will not remain many Topics of Diſcourſe, unleſs this be called into ſupply. And this indeed is a moſt inexhauſtible reſerve, it having ſo many ſprings to feed it, that 'tis ſcarce poſſible it ſhould fail. And when tis farther conſidered, how apt a miniſter it is to Envy, Spleen, Revenge, and other feminine Paſſions, we cannot ſuppoſe it can be unacceptable where any of thoſe bear ſway. But I believe it is not more frequently introduc'd by any thing then the vanity of Wit, which has no where a more free and exorbitant range then in cenſuring and deriding; nay, finds not only Exerciſe but triumph too, vain Perſons ſeldom conſidering the Infirmities or Follies of others, without ſome Complacencies, and aſſuming reflections on themſelves; which how unagreeable it renders this liberty of talking to that Modeſty we recommend, is obvious enough. And would God 'twere only oppoſit to that; but it is no leſs ſo to all the Obligations of Juſtice and Charity alſo, which are ſcarce ſo frequently violated by any thing, as by this licentiouſneſs of the tongue.

13. THERE is yet another vice of it, for

which the female Sex has bin generally accus'd, and that is reveling of ſecrets: an infirmity preſum'd ſo incident to them, that *Ariſtotle* is ſaid to have made it one of the three things he ſolemnly repented of, that he had ever truſted a Secret with a Woman. But the greater the prejudice is that they lie under in this reſpect, the greater ought to be their caution to vindicate not only their Perſons but their Sex, from the imputation, which is indeed extremely reprochful: this blabbing humor being a ſymptom of a looſe, impotent ſoul, a kind of incontinence of the mind, that can retain nothing committed to it; but as if that alſo had its Diabetic paſſion, perpetually and almoſt inſenſibly evacuating all. And indeed however we are willing to appropriate this to the Sex, yet the fault is owing only to this ill conſtitution of the mind, which is oft-times no leſs viſible in men; as on the contrary, thoſe women who by reaſon and vertue have acquir'd a Solidity and Firmneſs of mind, are as ſure repoſitories of a ſecret, as the moſt maſculine confident: and ſuch I have no intent to involve in this charge, but rather by propoſing their example to the reſt, ſhew that nature has put them under no fatal neceſſity of being thus impotent. A ſecret is no ſuch unruly thing, but it may be kept in: they may take the Wiſe mans word for it, *Eccluſ.* 19. 10. *If thou haſt heard*

a word

a word, let it die with thee, and be bold, it will not burſt thee.

14. This is a piece of daring manlineſs, which they may affect without breach of Modeſty; would God they would take it in exchange for that virile Boldneſs, which is now too common among many even of the beſt Rank. Such a degenerous Age do we now live in, that every thing ſeems inverted, even Sexes; whilſt men fall to the Effeminacy and Niceneſs of women, and women take up the Confidence, the Boldneſs of men, and this too under the notion of good Breeding. A bluſh (tho formerly reputed the color of Vertue) is accounted worſe manners then thoſe things which ought to occaſion it, and ſuch as nothing but the ſimplicity of a Country Girl can excuſe. But the infirmity for the moſt part proves very corrigible; a few weeks of the Town Diſcipline wears off that piece of Ruſticity, and advances them to a modiſh Aſſurance. Nor is that deſign'd to terminate in it ſelf, but it is to carry them on, till they arrive to a perfect Metamorphoſis; their Geſture, their Language, nay ſomtimes their Habit too being affectedly maſculine; ſo that what *Tacitus* ſpeaks of *Vitellius* in relation to his being a Prince, we may apply to them, and ſay, that *if others did not remember them to be women, themſelves could eaſily forget it.*

15. Yet

15. YET were this affectation confin'd only to the more innocent indifferent things, 'twere more tolerable; but alas it extends farther, and there are women who think they have not made a sufficient escape from their sex, 'till they have assumed the Vices of men too. A sober modest Dialect is too effeminate for them: a blustring ranting style is taken up, and (to shew them proficients in it) adorn'd with all the Oaths and Imprecations their memory or invention can supply: as if they meant to vindicate their sex from the imputation of Timorousness by daring God Almighty. 'Tis true indeed, an Oath sounds gratingly out of whatever mouth, but out of a womans it hath such an uncouth harshness, that there is no noise on this side Hell can be more amazingly odious; Yet this is a music that discordant Age hath introduc'd, no former having I think ever heard it in places at all civiliz'd. So that the female swearers want that poor shadow of excuse the men pretend to, it having bin so far from customary, that the unwontedness could not but force them to some industry and pains, e're they could acquire the habit, and set up for female Hectors; an essay, wherein they have bin very kind to the masculine, by shewing the world there can be somthing worse.

16 TIS said there want not some who complete the demonstration by the other parallel

rallel quality of Drinking also; a vice detestable in all, but prodigious in women, who put a double violence upon their nature, the one in the intemperance, the other in the immodesty. And tho they may take their immediate copy from men, yet (to the praise of their proficiency) they out-do their Exemplar and draw near the Original: nothing human being so much beast as a drunken woman. This is evident enough if we look only on the mere surface of the crime; but if we dive farther into its inferences and adherences, the affirmation is yet more irrefragable. She who is first a prostitute to Wine, will soon be to Lust also: she has dismist her Guards, discarded all the suggestions of reason, as well as Grace; and is at the mercy of any, of every assailant. And when we consider how much fuller the world is of *Amnons* then *Josephs*, it will not be hard to guess the fate of that womans Chastity, which has no other bottom then that of mens. So that unless her vice secure her vertue, and the loathsomness of the one, prevent attemts on the other, 'tis scarce imaginable a woman that loses her Sobriety should keep her Honesty. So that indeed I might more properly have made this reflexion when I come to speak of Modesty in the second notion of it, as it is oppos'd to Lightness and Wantonness: but it falls not much amiss now, to be the introduction to it.

17 And

17 AND if we consider Modesty in this sense, we shall find it the most indispensable requisite of a woman; a thing so essential and natural to the sex, that every the least declination from it, is a proportionable receding from Woman-hood, but the total abandoning it ranks them among Brutes, nay sets them as far beneath those, as an acquir'd vileness is below a native. I need make no collection of the verdicts either of the Philosophers or Divines in the case, it being so much an instinct of nature, that tho too many make a shift to suppress it in themselves, yet they cannot so darken the notion in others, but that an Impudent woman is lookt on as a kind of Monster, a thing diverted and distorted from its proper form. That there is indeed a strange repugnancy to nature, needs no other evidence then the strugling, and difficulty in the first violations of Modesty, which alwaies begin with regrets and blushes, and require a great deal of Self-denial, much of vicious Fortitude, to encounter with the recoilings and upbraidings of their own minds.

18. I make no doubt but this Age has arriv'd to as compendious arts of this kind, as industrious vice can suggest, and we have but too many instances of early proficients in this learning; yet I dare appeal even to the forwardest of them, whether at first they could

could not with more eaſe have kept their vertue then loſt it. Certainly ſuch are the Horrors and Shames that precede thoſe firſt Guilts, that they muſt commit a rape upon themſelves (force their own reluctancies and averſions) before they can become willing proſtitutes to others. This their Seducers ſeem well to underſtand, and upon that ſcore are at the pains of ſo many preparatory courtings, ſuch expence of preſents too; as if this were ſo uncouth a crime, that there were no hope to introduce it but by a confederacy of ſome more familiar vices, their Pride or Covetouſneſs.

19. The beſt way therefore to countermine thoſe Stratagems of men, is for women to be ſuſpiciouſly vigilant even of the firſt approches. He that means to defend a Fort, muſt not abandon the Outworks, and ſhe that will ſecure her Chaſtity, muſt never let it come to too cloſe a ſiege, but repel the very firſt and moſt remote inſinuations of a Temter. Therefore when we ſpeak of Modeſty in our preſent notion of it, we are not to oppoſe it only to the groſſer act of Incontinency; but to all thoſe misbehaviors, which either diſcover or may create an inclination to it; of which ſort is all Lightneſs of carriage, wanton glances, obſcene diſcourſe; things that ſhew a woman ſo weary of her honor, that the next comer may reaſonably

expect a ſurrender, and conſequently be invited to the Aſſault. Indeed they are ſuch, that one would rather think them the reſult of many acts, then merely the Prologue to one; and that nothing but a cuſtom of private ſin, conld ſupply impudence enough to do what is ſo publicly ſcandalous: and where this is found in thoſe of any conſiderable age, charity it ſelf can ſcarce paſs a milder cenſure. Yet poſſibly in thoſe of the youngeſt ſort, they may at firſt be taken up (as their dreſs is) merely in imitation of others, embrac'd implicitly upon the autority of thoſe, whoſe examples govern the modes. When a poor girl, who has ſtill ſo much of the child as to admire every thing that glitters, ſees theſe things uſed by the gay people of the World, 'tis no wonder if ſhe take theſe as part of their accompliſhments, and upon peril of that formidable calamity of being unfaſhionable, conform to them. Which yet do's not ſo much extenuate the guilt of thoſe few ſeduced perſons, as it aggravates that of the Seducers, and atteſts the ſtrange corruption of the age, that thoſe things which the leſs hardned ſort of proſtitutes were formerly aſhamed of, ſhould now paſs into the frequency and avowedneſs of a faſhion, become a part of Diſcipline and Inſtitution of youth; as if vice now diſdain'd to have any punies in its ſchole, and therefore by a prepoſterous anticipation, maks its

its pupils begin where they were wont to end; initiates them at firſt into that ſhameleſneſs which was wont to be the product only of a long habit. What the end will be of theſe Piqueerers in impudence, who thus put their vertue on the forlorn hope, is eaſie to divine. Yet is not this the only ſtate of danger: they who keep their ranks, and tho they do not provoke aſſaults, yet ſtay to receive them, may be far enough from ſafety. She that lends a patient ear to the praiſes of her Wit or Beauty, intends at firſt perhaps only to gratify her vanity; but when ſhe is once charm'd with that Sirens ſong, bewitcht with that Flattery, ſhe inſenſibly declines to a kindneſs for that perſon that values her ſo much: and when the ſpark ſhall be blow'd up by perpetual remonſtrances of Paſſion, and perhaps little Romantic artifices of pretending to die for her, with a thouſand other tricks, which luſt can ſuggeſt, 'twill like the *Naptha* Naturaliſts ſpeak of, in a moment grow to an unquenchable flame, to the ruine both of her vertue and honor.

20 Let no woman therefore preſume upon the innocence of her firſt intentions; ſhe may as well, upon confidence of a ſound conſtitution, enter a peſt-houſe and converſe with the plague, whoſe contagion do's not more ſubtley inſinuate it ſelf, then this ſort of temtation. And as in that caſe ſhe would

not ſtay to define what were the critical diſtance, at whch ſhe might approch with ſafety, but would run as far from it as ſhe could; ſo in this, it no leſs concerns her, to remove her ſelf from the poſſibility of danger, and (how unfaſhionable ſoever it be) to put on ſuch a ſevere Modeſty, that her very looks ſhould guard her, and diſcourage the moſt impudent aſſailant. Tis ſaid of *Philopemen*, that the *Lacedemonians* finding it their intereſt to corrupt him with mony, they were yet ſo poſſeſt with the reverence of his vertues, that none durſt undertake to attaque him; and ſure 'twere not impoſſible for women to arrive at the ſame ſecurity: ſuch an autority there is in Vertue, that where 'tis eminent, 'tis apt to controle all looſe deſires; and he muſt not be only luſtful but ſacrilegious, that attemts to violate ſuch a Sanctuary.

21. BUT perhaps that ſex may fear, that by putting on ſuch a Strictneſs, they ſhall loſe the glory of their Beauty, which is now eſtimated by the number of thoſe who court and adore them. To this in the firſt place I muſt ſay, that they are miſerable Trophies to Beauty that muſt be built on the ruins of vertue and honor; and ſhe that to boaſt the length of her hair ſhould hang her ſelf in it, would but act the ſame folly in a lower inſtance.

22. BUT then ſecondly, 'tis a great miſtake

ſtake to think their Beauty ſhall be leſs prized, ſince 'tis incident to mens nature to eſteem thoſe things moſt that are at diſtance, whereas an eaſie and cheap deſcent begets contemt. So long as they govern themſelves by the exact rules of Prudence and Modeſty, their luſtre is like the Meridian Sun in its clearneſs, which tho leſs approchable, is counted more glorious; but when they decline from thoſe, they are like that Sun in a cloud, which tho ſafelier gazed on is not half ſo bright. But beſides theſe collateral advantages, 'tis certain that Modeſty gives an immediate and direct improvement to Beauty; for tho men for their own vicious ends wiſh them ſever'd, yet they cannot but think they are the moſt amiable when united, and you ſhall hear them often commend the aſpect of that Modeſty, which they would fain circumvent.

23. BUT in the 3d place, there is nothing but ſuch a Reſervedneſs that can indeed make their Beauty triumphant. Parly and conqueſt are the moſt diſtant things; and ſhe that deſcends to treat with an aſſailant, what ever he may tell her of his being her captive, 'tis but in order to the making her his; which when ſhe once is, there is no ſtate of ſervitude half ſo wretched, nothing in the world being ſo ſlaviſhly abject as a proſtitute woman. For beſides all the intereſt of another life which ſhe baſely reſigns, ſhe ſacrifices all that

that is valuable in this: her reputation she puts wholly in his power that has debauched her, and which is worse, her reformation too. If she should have a mind to return to vertue, she dares not for fear he should divulge her former strayings from it: so that, like *Catiline*, she is engag'd to future evils to secure the past. Yea she subjects her self not only to his lust, but to all his humors and fancies, nay even to all those who have bin instrumental to their privacies, none of them all being to be displeas'd for fear of blabbing: and when 'tis remembred, what a sort of cattel they are, which are the engines in such affairs, there can scarce be any thing more deplorable then to be within their lash. Tis true indeed, some have found a way to cure this uneasiness by being their own delators, not only confessing but boasting their crime, and by an impudent owning prevent all accusations: yet even this serves but to attest the intolerableness of the former condition, when this worst of mischiefs is chose as a rescue. Their impatience of being alwaies in awe, makes them take up that resolution for infamy; which *Cesar* did for death, who said, Twas better to die once then to be alwaies in fear. And tho this desperate remedy may cure the fear, yet it ascertains the reproch; for whereas in the impeachment of others there is place for doubt, and charity may promt

promt ſome to disbelieve it, yet when the fact is juſtified by the offender, the evidence is uncontrolable, and withall doubles the infamy. For beſides that which adheres to the crime, there is a diſtinct portion due to the impudence; yet like the Scorpion it muſt cure its own ſting, and tho it increaſes the obloquy, yet it deadens the ſenſe of it.

24. But when they have thus ſteel'd their foreheads againſt all impreſſions of Shame, they are ſtill liable to many other painful effects of their ſin. What fears of being abandoned, what jealouſies of rivals, do often torture them? And indeed not without ground: for they cannot but know, that the ſame humor of variety which engaged their Paramors in their love, may do the ſame for another, and ſo on; it being as poſſible to graſp the air, as to confine a wandring luſt. Beſides what anxious apprehenſions have they of the approch of age, which they are ſure will render them loathed and deſpicable, as alſo of all intermedial decaies of Beauty? How critically do they examine their glaſs? and every wrinkle that repreſents in their face becomes a deep gaſh in the heart. But if they have at any time the leſure (or indeed the courage) to look inward, the view is yet more dreadful, a deform'd ſoul, ſpoil'd of its innocence, and render'd almoſt as bruti ſh as the ſin it has conſented to. But tho

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it be in ſome reſpects *like the beaſt that periſheth*, it is not, it cannot be in that which would moſt avail it: an endleſs being it cannot loſe, nor can it expect any thing from that preeminence of its nature, but an infinity of miſery. This is ſuch an amazing contemplation, as methinks, were it inſiſted on, ſhould allay the hotteſt blood; no impure flames being ſo fierce as to conteſt with thoſe of unquenchable fire. It is therefore, tho a very impious, yet no unskilful artifice of thoſe, who would vitiate women in their manners, to corrupt them in their Principles, and by extinguiſhing all hopes & fears of another World, perſwade them to immerſe boldly into all the abominations of this. Tis ſaid, this is now an art of wooing, the modern preludium to the baſeſt propoſals: it ſeems this age dares not truſt only to the former waies of ſeducement, fears there will not be women enough that will forget the intereſts of another World; and therefore is fain to ſet up a new party of others to disbelieve it. And I fear that deſign has bin too proſperous: many women are ſo much more concerned for their bodies then their ſouls, that they are contented the one ſhould be elevated upon the depreſſion and debaſement of the other; and whilſt with a vain tranſport, they can hear their outward form applauded as Angelical, or Divine, they can very tamely endure

endure to have their better part vilified and deſpiſed, defin'd to be only a puff of air in their noſtrils, which will ſcatter with their expiring breath, or in the Atheiſts Phraſe, *Wiſd.* 2. 6. *vaniſh as the ſoft air.* Whereas they ſhould conſider, that they who preach this doctrine to them, deſign it only to infer a pernicious uſe. 'Tis a Maxim in Politics, that thoſe counſils are ſuſpiciouſly to be ſcan'd, which carry in their front the adviſers intereſt; which certainly is never more viſible then in this caſe; he that once gains this point, never needing to conteſt for all the reſt. For he that can perſwade a woman out of her ſoul, will ſoon command her body; and then what was at firſt his intereſt, becomes hers at laſt; and her wiſhes of the mortality of her ſoul, are much ſtronger then 'tis poſſible her belief of it could be: which confirms abundantly my affirmation of the ſervile, wretched condition of ſuch a perſon. For if we judg that a very ſevere ſlavery, which makes people deſirous to reſign a temporal being, what ſhall we think of that which provokes them to renounce an eternal?

25. And now by this gradation of miſchiefs we may judg of the deplorable ſtate of thoſe who have abandoned their Vertue; wherein I doubt not the conſciences of many cannot only atteſt, but may improve the deſcription; and all I ſhall ſay to ſuch, is only

to consult that bosom monitor; which till they do, all Homilies will be insignificant. My design was not therefore to tell them what they too well feel, but only to point out their wrecks as warnings to others.

36 LET all those therefore who are yet untainted, and by being so, have their judgments clear and unbiast, consider soberly the misery of the other condition, and that not only to applaud, but secure their own; and when ever the outward pomps and gaudy splendors of a vitiated woman seem, like that of *Cresus*, to boast their happiness, let them look thro that Fallacy, and answer with *Solon*, *that those only are happy who are so at their end.* Their most exquisite deckings are but like the garlands on a beast design'd for Sacrifice; their richest gems are but the chains, not of their ornament but slavery; and their gorgeous apparel, like that of *Herod*, covers perhaps a putrid body, (for even that doth not seldom prove their fate) or however, a more putrid soul. They who can thus consider them, will avoid one great snare; for tis not alwaies so much the lust of the flesh, as that of the eies which betraies a woman. Tis the known infirmity of the Sex, to love gaiety, and a splendid appearance, which renders all temtations of that sort so connatural to them, that those who are not arrived to a more sober estimate of things, will scarce be

be ſecure. It will therefore be neceſſary for them to regulate their opinions, and reduce all ſuch things to their juſt value, and then they will appear ſo trifling, that they can never maintain any competition with the more ſolid intereſts of Vertue and Honor. For tho thoſe terms ſeem in this looſe Age to be exploded; yet where the things are viſible they extort a ſecret veneration, even from thoſe who think it their concern publicly to deride them: whereas on the other ſide a defection from them expoſes to all the contemt imaginable, renders them deſpis'd even by thoſe who betrai'd them to it, leaves a perpetual blot upon their Names, and their Family. For in the character of a woman, let Wit and Beauty, and all female accompliſhments ſtand in the front; yet if wantonneſs bring up the rear, the Satyr ſoon devours the Panegyric, and, as in an Echo, the laſt words only will reverberate, and her vice will be remembred when all the reſt will be forgot. But I need not declame upon this theme; the Son of *Syrach* has don it to my hand, in many paſſages, but eſpecially *Eccluſ.* 23. to which I refer the Reader.

32. What hath bin already ſaid, is, I ſuppoſe, ſufficient to convince every woman how much it is her concern to keep her ſelf ſtrictly within the bounds of Modeſty and Vertue. In order to which, there is nothing

more important then a judicious choice of their Company; I mean not only for men, but women alſo. Vice is contagious, and this eſpecially has that worſt quality of the Plague, that tis malicious, and would infect others. A woman that knows her ſelf ſcandalous, thinks ſhe is reprocht by the vertue of another, looks on her as one that is *made to reprove her waies*, as it is, *Wiſd.* 2. 14. and therefore in her own defence ſtrives to level the inequality, not by reforming her ſelf, (that ſhe thinks too hard a task) but by corrupting the other. To this end ſuch are willing to ſcrew themſelves into an acquaintance, will be officiouſly kind, and by all arts of condeſcention and obliging, endevor to enſnare a woman of reputation into their intimacy. And if they ſucceed, if they can but once entangle her into that cobweb-friendſhip; they then, ſpider-like, infuſe their venem, never leave their vile inſinuations till they have poiſoned and ruined her. But and if on the other ſide they meet with one of too much ſagacity to be ſo entrapped; if they cannot taint her Innocence, they will endevor to blaſt her Fame; repreſent her to the World to be what they would have made her, that is in the Pſalmiſts Phraſe, *ſuch an one as themſelves*, Pſal. 50. 24. ſo that there is no converſing with them, but with a manifeſt peril either of Vertue or Honor, which ſhould

ſhould methinks be a ſufficient diſſwaſive. Tis true, tis not alwaies in ones power to ſhun the meeting with ſuch perſons, they are too numerous, and too intruding to be totally avoided; unleſs, as St. *Paul* ſaies, 1 *Cor.* 5. 10. *one ſhould go out of the World.* But all voluntary converſe ſuppoſes a choice, and therefore every body that will may refrain that, may keep on the utmoſt frontiers of civility, without ever ſuffering any approch towards intimacy and familiarity.

33 AND ſure were this diſtance duly obſerved, it might be of excellent uſe, a kind of Lay-Excommunication, which might come very ſeaſonably to ſupply the want of the Eccleſiaſtic now out-dated. And this ſeems very well to agree with the ſenſe of *Solon*, the wiſe *Athenian* Law-giver, who, beſides that he ſhut the Temple-doors againſt them, interdicted them the ſacred Aſſemblies; made it one of his laws, that an Adultereſs ſhould not be permitted to wear any ornaments, that ſo they might in their dreſs carry the note of their infamy. Should we have the like diſtinction obſerved, I fear many of our gaieſt birds would be unplumed: and tho the ſame be not now an expedient practicable, yet the former is, and might be of very good uſe. For beſides that already mentioned of ſecuring the innocent, it might perhaps have a good effect on the guilty, who could not but reflect

reflect with ſome ſhame on themſelves, if they were thus ſingled out and diſcriminated; whereas whilſt they are ſuffered to mix with the beſt Societies, (like hurt Deer in an herd) they flatter themſelves they are undiſcernable.

34. BUT indeed the advantage of this courſe is yet more extenſive, and would reach the whole Sex, which now ſeems to lie under a general ſcandal, for the fault of particular perſons. We know any conſiderable number of ſmutty ears caſts a blackneſs on the whole field, which yet were they apart, would perhaps not fill a ſmall corner of it; and in this uncharitable Age, things are apt to be denominated not from the greater but worſer part: whereas were the precious ſevered from the vile, by ſome note of diſtinction, there might then a more certain eſtimate be made: and I cannot be ſo ſevere to woman-kind, as not to believe the ſcandalous part would then make but a ſmall ſhew, which now makes ſo great a noiſe.

35. BESIDES this I can ſuggeſt but one way more for women of honor to vindicate their ſex, and that is by making their own vertue as illuſtrious as they can; and by the bright ſhine of that, draw off mens eies from the worſer proſpect. And to this there is requir'd not only innocence, but prudence; to abſtain, as from all real evil, *ſo from the appearance*

pearance of it too, 1 Theſſ. 5. 22. not, by any doubtful or ſuſpicious action, to give any umbrage for cenſure, but as the Apoſtle ſaies in another caſe, 2 Cor. 11. 11. *to cut off occaſion from them that deſire occaſion*; to deny themſelves the moſt innocent liberties, when any ſcandalous inference is like to be deduc'd from them. And tho perhaps no caution is enough to ſecure againſt the malicious, and the jealous, tho tis poſſible ſome black mouth may aſperſe them, yet they have ſtill *Plato's* reſerve, who being told of ſome who had defam'd him, *'tis no matter ſaid he, I will live ſo that none ſhall believe them.* If their lives be ſuch, that they may acquit themſelves to the ſober and unprejudiced, they have all the ſecurity can be aſpir'd to in this world; the more evincing atteſtation they muſt attend from the unerring Tribunal hereafter; where there lies a certain appeal for all injur'd perſons who can calmly wait for it.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of Meekneſs.

1. IN the next place we may rank Meekneſs as a neceſſary feminine Vertue; this even Nature ſeems to teach, which abhors monſtroſities and diſproportions, and therefore having allotted to women a more ſmooth and ſoft compoſition of body, infers thereby her intention, that the mind ſhould correſpond with it. For tho the adulterations of art can repreſent in the ſame Face beauty in one poſition, and deformity in another; yet nature is more ſincere, and never meant a ſerene and clear forehead ſhould be the frontiſpiece to a cloudy tempeſtuous heart. Tis therefore to be wiſht they would take the admonition, and whilſt they conſult their glaſſes, whether to applaud or improve their outward form, they would caſt one look inwards, and examine what ſymmetry there is held with a fair outſide, whether any ſtorm of paſſion darken and overcaſt their interior beauty, and uſe at leaſt an equal diligence to reſcue that, as they would to clear their face from any ſtain or blemiſh.

2. BUT it is not nature only which ſuggeſts

geſts this but the God of nature too, Meekneſs being not only recommended to all as a Chriſtian Vertue, but particularly enjoin'd to women as a peculiar accompliſhment of their Sex, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. where after the mention of all the exquiſite and coſtly deckings of art, this one *ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit*, is confronted to them, with this eminent atteſtation, that it is *in the ſight of God of great price*, and therefore to all who will not enter diſpute with God, and conteſt his judgment, it muſt be ſo too. Now, tho Meekneſs be in it ſelf a ſingle entire Vertue, yet it is diverſifi'd, according to the ſeveral faculties of the ſoul, over which it has influence; ſo that there is a Meekneſs of the Underſtanding, a Meekneſs of the Will, and a Meekneſs of the Affections: all which muſt concur to make up the meek and quiet ſpirit.

3. AND firſt of the Meekneſs of the Underſtanding, it conſiſts in a pliableneſs to conviction, and is directly oppoſite to that ſullen adherence obſervable in too many; who judg of tenets not by their conformity to truth and reaſon, but to their prepoſſeſſions, and tenaciouſly retain'd opinions, only becauſe they (or ſome in whom they confide) have once own'd them; and certainly ſuch a temper is of all others the moſt obſtructive to Wiſdom. This puts them upon the chance of a Lottery, and what they firſt happen to draw,

determines them merely upon the priviledg of its precedency: ſo that had *Mahomet* firſt ſeiz'd them, his tenure would have bin as indefeſable as Chriſt's now. How great the force of ſuch prejudices are, we may ſee by the oppoſitions it rais'd againſt Chriſtain Doctrine in groſs at its firſt promulgation; the Jews blind zeal for the Traditions of their Fathers, engaging them in the murder even of that very Meſſias whom thoſe Traditions had taught them to expect, and after in the perſecution of that Doctrine which his Reſurrection had ſo irrefragably atteſted. And to juſtify the propriety of this obſervation to thoſe I now write to, 'tis expreſly affirm'd, *Acts* 13. 50. that they made uſe of the zeal of the female Proſelytes for that purpoſe. *The* Jews *ſtirred up the devout and honorable women, and rais'd a perſecution againſt* Paul *and* Barnabas. So that 'tis no unſeaſonable advice of ſuch, to be ſure they ſee well their way before they run too fierce a carriere in it, otherwiſe the greateſt heat without light do's but reſemble that of the bottomleſs pit, where flames and darkneſs do at once cohabit.

4. BUT whilſt I decry this prejudicate ſtifneſs, I intend not to plead for its contrary extreme, and recommend a too eaſy Flexibility, which is a temper of equal, if not more ill conſequence then the former. The adhering to one opinion can expoſe but to one error,

error, but a mind that lies open to the effluxes of all new tenets, may ſucceſſively entertain a whole ocean of deluſions; and to be thus yielding, is not a Meekneſs, but ſervileneſs of Underſtanding. Indeed 'tis ſo great a weakneſs of mind, that the Apoſtle ſinks it ſomwhat below the impotence of women, and reſembles it to that of children, *Eph.* 4. 14. Yet it ſeems the folly of ſome women had levell'd them with children in this matter: for the ſame Apoſtle takes notice of ſuch, to whom as he gives the Epithet of *ſilly*, ſo the latter part of the Character ſpeaks them incorrigibly ſo, *ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledg of the truth*, 1 Tim. 3. 6. a deſcription which if we compare with our times, we muſt think prophetic. For how many inſtances hath this age given us of women ſo led captive; who being either affected with the novelty, or ſeduced by the pretended zeal of a new teacher, have given up their underſtandings to him: and for a while this ſtrong man has kept poſſeſſion, but when a ſtronger then he hath come, it has fared as with him in the Goſpel, a louder Zeal or a newer Doctrine ſoon divides his ſpoils; and that by force of the very ſame principle on which he ſet up, which within a while undermines the latter alſo, and ſo ſucceſſively, till the poor proſelyte has bin hurried thro all the mazes of wild error, and at laſt perhaps (like a palate diſtra-

cted by too much variety) ſhe fixes upon that which at firſt ſhe moſt decried. This has bin eventually true in ſome, who ſetting out in the fierceſt deteſtation of Popery, have wandred ſo long like the blinded *Syrians*, 2 *Kings* 6. 20. that they have at laſt found themſelves in the midſt of *Samaria*; by an inſenſible circular motion bin brought about to that Religion, from which alone they deſign'd to fly. So little do itching ears know whither they may be carried: and indeed the ear when infected with that prurient humor may vie Miſchiefs with the tongue, which St. *James* tells us *Chap.* 3. 25. *is* (tho a little member) *a world of iniquity.*

5. Tis therefore the moſt important concern of all, to fortify that ſo aſſailable part; but 'tis eſpecially ſo of women, not only in reſpect of that natural imbecillity, which renders them liable to ſeducement; but alſo becauſe the opinion of their being ſo, makes them particularly aim'd at by ſeducers. For as he who is to put off adulterated wares, will chuſe the moſt unwary chapmen; ſo theſe Sophiſticators of Divinity deſire the moſt undiſcerning auditors. And truly that ſo many of that Sex are ſo, I do not ſo much impute to any natural defect, as to the looſe notions they have of Religion, of which they have perhaps ſome general confuſed apprehenſions, but have ſo little penetrated the depth

depth of it, that they know not why they are *Chriſtians* rather then *Turks*, why of the Church of *England* rather then that of *Rome*, or *Geneva*. And while they are thus unfixt, and have no better principle then Cuſtom and compliance; they have nothing to anſwer to any the groſſeſt deceit that can be obtruded upon them, which for ought they know or have conſider'd may be as true as any thing they formerly profeſt. Now when any one in this condition ſhall be aſſaulted, not only by the repeted importunities of falſe teachers, but alſo by ingeminated threatnings of hell and damnation; ſhe is like one awaked by the outcry of fire, and in that amaze will be apt to run where ever the firſt diſcoverer of her danger ſhall lead her.

6. I SHALL therefore moſt earneſtly recommend it as the beſt Antidote againſt the poiſon of novel Doctrins, to examine well the grounds of the old. For want of this it is that our Church has bin expoſed to ſo many frivolous cavils, it being too incident to the perverſe Pride of human nature, to ſpeak evil of things we underſtand not. And had our ſhe-zealots firſt conſulted ſome ſober guides, and from them underſtood upon what grounds the Practice as well as Doctrine of our Church was founded, they could not ſo eaſily have bin carried away *by every wind of Doctrin*, as the Apoſtle phraſes it, *Eph.* 4.14.

7. INDEED

7. Indeed this is no more then common justice exacts, which forbids the condemning even the vileſt malefactor unheard: (and unheard and not underſtood, are in this caſe terms equivalent) yet ſure they ow ſomthing more to that Church from whoſe miniſtry themſelves muſt confeſs to have derived their Chriſtianity, in whoſe boſom, they have bin cherisht, and conſequently may plead a mothers right in them. So that unleſs poſſeſſion, which fortifies civil rights, deſtroies the Eccleſiaſtic; ſhe may challenge beſides that natural juſtice (which is the common due of Humanity) a parental reſpect and reverence, a debt which is ſure very ill anſwered by thoſe who caſt off her obedience before they have at all conſidered what it is ſhe commands. And if the abdicating a child be a thing ſo unnatural, as needs ſome very important cauſe to juſtify it; the renouncing of a Parent muſt require a reaſon as far tranſcending that as the guilt do's, if it be cauſeleſs: and ſuch it muſt inevitably be in all, who for want of due examination, ſuffer themſelves to be led into groundleſs prejudices and diſguſts.

8. To prevent that guilt and a multitude of others which ſpring from it, I muſt again repete my Propoſal, that women of Quality (who are preſumed to want neither Parts nor leiſure for it) would a little look into the inſide

inſide of the Religion they profeſs: if it be a true one, 'twill bear the inſpection, truth never ſhunning the light; if it be not, the diſcovery cannot be too early. And indeed among the many remarkable impreſſes of truth our Church bears, this is one, that ſhe do's not blindfold her Proſelytes, leaves them the uſe of their diſcerning Faculty, and do's not by obtruding upon them an implicit belief, force them to lay down their Reaſon when they take up their Faith. And now why ſhould not Ladies ſpend a few of their many idle hours in this inquiſition, I mean, not to embark themſelves in a maze of controverſies, but only to diſcern thoſe plain grounds of Truth on which our Church builds; which if well digeſted, will prove a better Amulet againſt deluſion then the reading whole *Tomes* of diſputations, more apt to diſtract then fortify their underſtandings. And had they thus don, had their minds bin ballaſted by ſober principles, ſo many of them had never made up the triumphs of ſo many and ſo various ſeducers. And tho to ſuch this advertiſement may come too late (like aſſiſtance after a defeat) yet it may be a ſeaſonable caution to others: and to thoſe I offer it, as that very temper wherein conſiſts that rational Meekneſs of the Underſtanding I would recommend to them, which is equally violated by a blind Obſtinacy, or as blind a Flexibility.

9. A SECOND ſort of Meekneſs is that of the Will, which lies in its juſt ſubordination, and ſubmiſſion to a more ſupreme Autority, which in Divine things is the Will of God; in Natural or Moral, right Reaſon; and in human Conſtitutions, the command of Superiors. And ſo long as the will governs it ſelf by theſe in their reſpective Orders, it tranſgreſſes not the Meekneſs requir'd of it. But experience atteſt, that the Will is now in its depravation an imperious Faculty, apt to caſt off that ſubjection to which it was deſign'd, and act independently from thoſe motives which ſhould influence it. This God knows is too common in all Ages, all Conditions, and Sexes: but the Feminine lies more eſpecially under an ill name for it. Whether that have grown from the low opinion conceived of their Reaſon, leſs able to maintain its Empire, or from the multipli'd habitual inſtances themſelves have given of unruly Wills, I ſhall not undertake to determine; but either way 'tis, I am ſure, ſo great a reproch as they ſhould be very induſtrious to wipe off. And truly I know nothing more incentive to that endeavor, then the having a right eſtimate of the Happineſs as well as Vertue of a governable Will. How calmly do thoſe glide thro all (even the rougheſt) events, that can but maſter that ſtubborn Faculty? A will reſign'd to Gods, how do's it enervate

enervate and enfeeble any calamity? Nay indeed it triumphs over it, and by that conjunction with him that ordains it, may be ſaid to command even what it ſuffers. 'Twas a Philoſophical Maxim, that a Wiſe moral man could not be injured, could not be miſerable. But ſure 'tis much more true of him who has that divine Wiſdom of Chriſtian reſignation, that twiſts and inwraps all his choices with God's, and is neither at the pains nor hazards of his own elections; but is ſecure, that unleſs Omniſcience can be deceived, or Omnipotence defeated, he ſhall have what is really beſt for him.

10. PROPORTIONABLE (tho not equal) to this, is the happineſs of a Will regulated by Reaſon in things within its Sphere: 'tis the dignity of human Nature, and that which diſtinguiſhes it from that of Beaſts. Yea, even thoſe grow more contemtible in their kinds, the farther they are removed from it. The ſtupid ſturdineſs of an Aſs has render'd it Proverbial for folly, when the tractableneſs of other Animals has temted ſome to liſt them among Rationals. Beſides reaſon affords ſomthing of a Baſis and Foundation for the Will to bottom on. He that governs himſelf by Reaſon (that being ſtill the ſame) will act equally and conſonant to himſelf; but he that do's a thing this moment, only becauſe he will, may the next have as weigh-

ty an argument to do ſomthing quite contrary; and ſo may ſpend his whole time in unravelling his *Spiders webs*, as the Prophet rightly calls the vain deſigns of ſuch brutiſh men, *Iſay.* 59. 5. Not to ſpeak of the recoilings and upbraidings of the rational faculties, which are the uneaſie attendants of thoſe who reſiſt its more direct admonitions; there is nothing expoſes to more ſecular ruins. An ungovernable Will is the moſt precipitous thing imaginable, and like the Devil in the Swine, hurries headlong to deſtruction; and yet deprives one of that poor reſerve, that faint comfort of the miſerable, Pity; which will not be ſo much invited by the miſery, as averted by that wilfulneſs which cauſed it. Nay indeed, ſo little can ſuch perſons expect the compaſſion of others, that 'twill be hard for them to afford themſelves their own; the conſciouſneſs that their calamities are but the iſſues of their own perverſneſs, being apt to diſpoſe them more to hate then pity. And this is no ſmall accumulation of wretchedneſs, when a man ſuffers not only directly, but at the rebound too; reinflicts his miſeries upon himſelf by a grating reflection on his own madneſs. Yea, ſo great an aggravation is it, that even Hell it ſelf is enhanced and compleated by it; all the torments there being edged and ſharpned by the woful remembrance, that they might once have bin avoided.

II. In

11. IN the laſt place a Will duly ſubmiſſive to lawful Superiors, is not only an amiable thing in the eies of others, but exceedingly happy to ones ſelf; 'tis the parent of peace and order, both public and private; a bleſſing ſo conſiderable, as is very cheaply bought with a little receeding from ones own will or humor: whereas the contrary temper is the ſpring and original of infinit confuſions, the grand incendiary which ſets Kingdoms, Churches, Families, in combuſtion; a flat contradiction not only to the word, but even the works of God; a kind of Anticreative power, which reduces things to that Chaos from whence God drew them. Our age has given us too many and too pregnant inſtances of its miſchievous effects, which may ſerve to enhance the value of that governable malleable temper I now recommend. And as a will thus reſign'd to Reaſon and juſt Autority, is a felicity all rational natures ſhould aſpire to; ſo eſpecially the feminine Sex, whoſe paſſions being naturally the more impetuous, ought to be the more ſtrictly guarded and kept under the ſevere diſcipline of Reaſon: for where tis otherwiſe, where a woman has no guide but her Will, and her Will is nothing but her Humor, the event is ſure to be fatal to her ſelf, and often to others alſo.

12. AND the hazard of this renders that other reſtraint of the will, I mean that of obedience to ſuperiors a very happy impoſition; tho perhaps tis not alwaies thought ſo: for thoſe who reſiſt the government of Reaſon, are not very apt to ſubmit to that of Autority. Yet ſure God and nature do atteſt the particular expediency of this to women, by having placed that Sex in a degree of inferiority to the other. Nay farther tis obſervable, that as there are but three ſtates of life, thro which they can regularly paſs, *viz.* Virginity, Mariage, and Widow-hood; two of them are ſtates of Subjection, the firſt to the parent, the ſecond to the husband, and the third, as it is caſual, whether ever they arrive to it or no, ſo if they do, we find it by God himſelf reckon'd as a condition the moſt deſolate and deplorable. If I ſhould ſay this happens upon that very ſcore that they are left to their own guidance, the ſad wracks of many would too much juſtify the gloſs: but however it evinces, that God ſets not the ſame value upon their being maſterleſs, which ſome of them do, whilſt he reckons them moſt miſerable, when they are moſt at liberty.

13. AND ſince Gods aſſignation has thus determined ſubjection to be the womens lot, there needs no other argument of its fitneſs, or for their acquieſcence. Therefore when

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ever they oppoſe it, the contumacy flies higher then the immediat Superior, and reaches God himſelf. And I am apt to think there would not many of that timorous Sex dare ſo far, were it not for ſome falſe punctillioes of honor, which (like thoſe among our Duelliſts) have impoſed themſelves. Theſe repreſent Meekneſs and Submiſſion as a ſilly ſheepiſh quality, unfit for women of breeding and ſpirit: whilſt an imperious obſtinacy paſſes for nobleneſs and greatneſs of mind. But alas they are wofully miſtaken in their notion of a great ſpirit, which conſiſts in ſcorning to do unworthy and vile things, and couragiouſly encountering the adverſe events of life, not in ſpurning a duty, or ſeeking to pull themſelves from that Sphere where the divine Wiſdom hath placed them. No ſure, ſtubbornneſs is the mark only of a great ſtomac, not of a great mind; and the cruelty of a coward may as well denominate him valiant, as the ungovernableneſs of a woman can ſpeak her generous.

14 In this I preſume I ſpeak the common ſenſe of all, for what value ſoever they put upon themſelves, nothing renders them leſs acceptable to others; an imperious woman being a plague to her relatives, and a deriſion to ſtrangers, yea and a torment to her ſelf: every the leaſt contradiction (which a meek perſon would paſs over inſenſibly) inflaming ſuch an unruly

unruly temper, and tranſporting her to ſuch extravagances, as often produce very miſchievous effects. On the other ſide if ſhe be humor'd and complied with, that ſerves only to make her more inſolent and intolerable; makes her humors grow to ſuch an height, that ſhe knows not her ſelf what would pleaſe her, and yet expects that others ſhould: ſo that to ſuch a one, we may apply what *Hannibal* ſaid of *Marcellus*, that if he were vanquiſhed, he never gave reſt to himſelf, nor if he were victorious, to others. Certainly the uneaſineſs of a perverſe ſpirit is ſo great, that could ſuch come but to compare it with the calm and happy ſerenity of Meekneſs and Obedience, there would need no other Lecture to commend them to their eſteem or practice.

15. THE laſt branch of Meekneſs is that of Affections, and conſiſts in reducing the paſſions to a temper and calmneſs, not ſuffering them to make uproars within to diſturb ones ſelf, nor without to the diſquieting of others; and to this regulation Meekneſs is generally ſubſervient. Yet becauſe the correcting of ſome particular paſſions are more immediatly aſſignable to other vertues, I ſhall only inſiſt upon that, on which this has a more direct and peculiar influence, I mean Anger, a two-edged paſſion, which whilſt it deals its blows without, wounds yet more fatally within. The commotion and vexation which an angry man feels,

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is far more painful then any thing he can ordinarily inflict upon another: herein juſtifying the Epithet uſually given to Anger, that it is a ſhort madneſs; for who that were in his right wits, would incur a greater miſchief to do a leſs? It is indeed ſo great a diſtemper of the mind, that he that is poſſeſt with it is incompetent for any ſober undertaking, and ſhould as much be ſuſpended from acting, as one in a Phrenſie or Lunacy. This was the judgment and practice too of *Plato*, who going to chaſtiſe a ſervant, and finding himſelf grow angry, ſtopt his correction; a friend coming in and asking what he was doing, *puniſhing*, replies he, *an angry man*, as thinking himſelf unfit to diſcipline another, till he had ſubdued his own paſſion. Another time his ſlave having offended him, *I would beat thee*, ſaies he, *but that I am angry*. It were endleſs indeed to recite the black Epithets given by all Moraliſts to this vice. It ſhall ſuffice to take the ſuffrage of the Wiſeſt of men, one that had acquainted himſelf to *know madneſs and folly*, Eccl. 1. 17. and we find it his ſentence, that *anger reſts in the boſoms of fools*, Eccl. 7. 11.

16. AND what is thus univerſally unbecoming to human nature, cannot ſure be leſs indecent for the gentler Sex: tis rather more ſo, every thing contracting ſo much more of deformity, by how much it receeds from its proper

proper kind. Now nature hath befriended women with a more cool and temperate conſtitution, put leſs of fire, and conſequently of choler, in their compoſitions; ſo that their heats of that kind are adventitious and preternatural, rais'd often by fancy or pride, and ſo both look more unhandſomly, and have leſs of pretence to veil and cover them. Beſides women have a native feebleneſs, unable to back and aſſert their angers with any effective force, which may admoniſh them twas never intended they ſhould let looſe to that paſſion, which nature ſeems by that very inability to have interdicted them. But when they do it, they render themſelves at once deſpiſed and abhorr'd; nothing being more ridiculouſly hateful, then an impotent rage.

17. BUT as the moſt feeble inſect may ſomtimes diſturb, tho not much hurt us, ſo there is one feminine weapon which as 'tis alwaies ready, ſo proves often troubleſom, I mean the Tongue, which, tho in its loudeſt clamors can naturally invade nothing but the ear, yet even that is a moleſtation. The barking of a dog, tho we are ſecure he cannot bite, is a grating unpleſant ſound, and while women ſeek that way to vent their rage, they are but a ſort of ſpeaking brutes, and ſhould conſider whether that do not reflect more contemt upon themſelves, then their moſt virulent reproches can fix upon others.

18. BUT

18. BUT ſome things have had the luck to acquire a formidableneſs no body knows how: and ſure there is no greater inſtance of it then in this caſe. A clamorous woman is lookt on, tho not with reverence, yet with much dread; and we often find things don to prevent or appeaſe her ſtorms, which would be denied to the calm and rational deſires of a meeker perſon. And perhaps ſuch ſucceſſes have not bin a little acceſſory to the fomenting the humor: yet ſure it gives them little cauſe of triumph, when they conſider how odious it makes them, how unfit (yea intolerable) for human ſociety. Let them take the verdict of *Solomon*, who declares *it better to dwell in a corner of a houſe top, then with a brawling woman in a wide houſe*, Prov. 25. 24. Nor do's the ſon of *Sirac* ſpeak leſs ſharply tho more ironically, *Eccluſ.* 26. 27. *A loud crying woman and a ſcold, ſhall be ſought out to drive away the enemy.* And tho he taxes the feminine vices impartially enough, yet there is ſcarce any of them which he more often and more ſeverely brands then this of unquietneſs. It ſeems twas a thing generally lookt on as very inſufferable; as appears by *Socrates*, who when he deſign'd to diſcipline himſelf to perfect patience and tolerance, knew no better way of exerciſe, then to get a ſhrew to his wife, an excellence that may perhaps again recommend a woman,

when we fall to an age of Philoſophers; but at preſent twill be hard for any of our *Xantippes* to find a *Socrates*; and therefore that quality is as deſtructive to their intereſts in getting husbands, as it is to the husbands quiet when he is got. But I preſume I need not declame further againſt this fault, which I ſuppoſe cannot be frequent among that rank of women to whom this Tract is intended: for if neither moral nor divine Conſiderations have prevented it, yet probably civility and a gentile education hath: a ſcold being a creature to be lookt for only in Stalls and Markets, not among perſons of quality. Yet if there be any that have deſcended to ſo ſordid a practice, they have ſo far degraded themſelves, that they are not to wonder if others ſubſtract that reſpect, which upon other accounts they might demand.

19. AND to ſuch I ſhould recommend the uſual method of Phyſic, which is to cure by revulſion: let that ſharp humor which ſo habitually flows to the tongue, be taught a little to recoile, and work inward; and inſtead or reviling others, diſcipline and correct themſelves: let them upbraid their own madneſs, that to gratify an impotent, nay a moſt painful paſſion, have degenerated from what their nature, their qualities, their education, deſign'd them. And if they can thus reverſe their diſpleſures, twill not only ſecure

cure others from all their indecent aſſaults, but it will at laſt extinguiſh them. For Anger is corroſive, and if it be kept only to feed upon its ſelf, muſt be its own devourer; if it be permitted to fetch no forrage from without, nor to nuriſh it ſelf with ſuſpicions and ſurmiſes of others, nor to make any ſallies at the tongue, it cannot long hold out.

20. AND how much they will herein conſult their intereſt and their reputation too, they may be taught by *Solomon*, who makes it the diſtinctive *ſign of a fooliſh woman, to be clamorous*, Prov. 9. 13. whereas when he gives the character of his Excellent woman, he links Wiſdom and Gentleneſs together, *She openeth her mouth with wiſdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindneſs*, Prov. 21 26. If this verdict may be admitted (as ſure it ought, whether we conſider his wiſdom, or dear bought experience in women) it will confute the common plea of querulous ſpirits, who think to ſeem inſenſible of any the leaſt provocation, is to appear ſilly and ſtupid; tho truly if it were ſo, 'twould be full as eligible as to appear mad and raving, as they commonly do in the tranſport of their fury.

21. To conclude, Meekneſs is ſo amiable, ſo indearing a quality, and ſo peculiarly embelliſhing to women, that did they but all conſider it with half the attention they do their more trivial exterior ornaments, 'twould

certainly be taken up as the universal mode, in all the several variations of it this Section has presented.

SECT. III.

Of Compassion.

1. OF near Affinity to the Vertue of Meekness, is that of Mercy and Compassion, which indeed can scarce thrive in any place where the former hath not prepared the soil: Anger and Obstinacy being like that rough East-wind which brought the Egyptian Locust, *Exod.* 10. 13. to eat up every green thing in the Land. A mind harrassed with its own impatiency, is not leisure to observe, much less to condole the calamities of others. But as a calm and clear day befriends us with a more distinct Prospect of distant Objects; so when all is quiet and serene within us, we can then look about us, and discern what exigencies of others invite our pities.

2. I need not say much to raise an estimate of this Vertue, since 'tis so essential to our Nature, so interwoven in the composition of Humanity, that we find in Scripture phrase, Compassion is generally seated in the most inward

inward ſenſible part of our frame, and bowels. So *Col.* 3. 12. *Put on therefore bowels of mercy*; and *Phil.* 2. 1. *Bowels and mercies.* So that a cruel ruthleſs perſon unmans himſelf, and is by the common vote of mankind to be liſted among brutes; nay, not among the better, but only the more hateful, noxious ſort of them.

3. But this is yet more unnatural in the female Sex, which being of ſofter mold, is more pliant and yielding to the impreſſions of pity, and by the ſtrength of fancy redoubles the horror of any ſad object. Yea ſo remarkable is this tenderneſs, that God, when he would moſt magnify his own compaſſion, illuſtrates it by that of women, as the higheſt human inſtance. Indeed ſuch a propenſion have women to commiſeration, that they are uſually taxed with an exceſs in it; ſo that any imprudent lenity is Proverbially called, A womaniſh Pity: and therefore it may be thought an impertinence to exhort them to that which they can ſcarce avoid. But to this I anſwer, firſt, that in this degenerous Age, 'tis no news to ſee people violate their inſtincts, as well as their duties, and be worſe then their nature inclines them; many ſins being committed even againſt the grain, and with violence to conſtitution.

4. Yet ſecondly, 'tis not a meer melting of the eies, or yerning of the bowels I

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deſign to recommend: Alas, their tears will not be drink to a thirſty ſoul, nor will ſhivering at his nakedneſs clothe him. This is ſuch an inſignificant mercy as St. *James* deſcribes, ſaying to a brother or ſiſter, *be ye warmed, be ye filled, but not giving them things needful to the body*, c. 2. 16. Indeed, ſhe that weeps over thoſe diſtreſſes ſhe will not relieve, might have bin fit to be enter'd in the liſt of the mourning women among the Jews and Heathens, who were hired to make up the tragic Pomp of Funerals with their mercenary ſorrow, but had no real concern in that loſs they ſeemed to bewail. 'Tis therefore a more active ſort of Compaſſion to which I would invite them; and yet for methods ſake, I ſhall conſider it under two diſtinct Heads, Giving, and Forgiving.

5. By Giving, in this place, I mean not a general liberality (tho that prudently bounded, is an Excellence well becoming Perſons of Fortune) but only ſuch a Giving as terminates upon the needy, and is applied to ſuccor their indigencies. To give to thoſe from whom they may expect returns, may be a deſign, but at the beſt can be but generoſity and frankneſs of humor. 'Tis only then mercy (as Chriſt himſelf has defined it) when it is to thoſe from whom they can *hope for nothing again*.

6 AND

6. And in this Vertue women have in former Ages eminently excelled: yea, ſo eſſential was it, that we find *Solomon* thought not their character compleat without it, but numbers it among the properties of his Vertuous woman, *Prov.* 31. 20. *She ſtretcheth forth her hand to the poor, and reacheth her hand to the needy.* And it is a little obſervable, that after he has deſcrib'd her Induſtry and Diligence for the acquiring of Wealth, this is ſet in the front of her diſburſments as the principal uſe ſhe made of it; and precedes her providing Scarlet for her Houſhold, or fine Linen and Purple for her ſelf, v. 11. 22. The application is very obvious, and admoniſhes all that own the ſame Title of Vertuous Women, to prefer the neceſſities of others before their own ſuperfluities and delicacies. Nay, if they look further, and conſider who it is that is perſonated in the poor, that begs in every needy diſtreſſed ſuppliant, and that will finally own every act of mercy as don to himſelf, methinks they ſhould ſomtimes think fit to ſacrifice even their moſt moderate enjoiments to their charity, be aſhamed to ſerve themſelves before their Savior, or let him ſtand naked and hungry, whilſt they are ſolacing with that which would relieve him.

7. But how then ſhall they anſwer it, who ſuffer him to be ſupplanted, not by their needs, but exceſſes; who have ſo devoted their hearts

and

and purſes to vanity and luxury, that they have neither will nor power to ſuccor the wants of others? How unequal and diſproportionate is it, that thoſe who ſtudy to fling away mony upon themſelves, cannot be temted by any importunity and diſtreſs, to drop an alms to the poor? What a propoſterous ſight is it to ſee a Lady, whoſe gay Attire gives her the glittering of the Sun, yet have nothing of its other properties, never to cheer any drooping, languiſhing creature by her influence? Tis the counſel of the ſon of *Sirac*, *not to give the poor any occaſion to curſe thee*, Eccluſ. 4. 5. But ſure ſuch perſons do it, if the poor happen not to have more Charity then they exemplify to them. For when they ſhall find ſuch hard hearts under ſuch ſoft raiment, ſee them beſtow ſo much upon the decking their own bodies, and do nothing towards the neceſſary ſupport of their; 'tis a ſhrewd trial of their Meekneſs. Poverty is apt of it ſelf to imbitter the ſpirit, and needs not ſuch an additional temtation.

8. NAY farther, when a poor ſtarving wretch ſhall look upon one of theſe gay creatures, and ſee that any one of the baubles, the looſeſt appendage of her dreſs, a fan, a buſk, perhaps a black patch, bears a price that would warm his emty bowels; will he not have ſharp incitations not only to execrate her pride, and his own poverty, but conſequently

ly to repine at the unequal distribution of Providence, and add sin to his misery? The denial therefore of an alms may be a double cruelty, to the soul as well as to the body. 'Tis said of *Xenocrates*, that a chased Bird flying to his bosom, he rescued it with much satisfaction, saying, He had not betraied a suppliant; but this is in that case revers'd, and in a higher instance; for what can be more the betraying of a suppliant, then instead of supplying his wants, to rob him of his innocence, and be his snare in lieu of his refuge? This is a consideration I wish more deeply impress upon the women of this Age: and truly 'tis their concern it should be so, for since at the last day the inquest shall be so particular upon this very thing, 'tis but necessary they should examine how they are fitted to pass that test.

9. Let them therefore keep a preparatory audit within their own breast, reflect upon the expences of their vanity, what the delicacy of their food, what the richness and variety of their clothes, nay what the meer hypocrisies of their dress, in false hair, and complexions has cost them; to which they may also add the charge of their recreations and divertisments, those costly arts of chasing away that time, which they will one day wish to recal. Let them I say compute all this, and then confront to it the account of their Cha-

rity, and I much fear the latter will with many of them be comparatively as undiſcernable, as *Socrates* found *Alcibiades*'s Lands in the Map of the whole World; be ſo perfectly over-whelm'd, that it will appear little in their own ſight, and nothing in Gods.

10. FOR if the poor Widows mite acquired a value meerly from her poverty, that ſhe had no more; by the rule of contraries we may conclude,, how deſpicable the ſcanty oblations of the rich are in Gods account. If even their liberality who gave much, was outvied by a farthing, *Mar.* 12. 41. to what point of diminution muſt their niggardly offerings, who give little, be reduc'd? eſpecially when they ſhall be compared with the numerous and coſtly ſacrifices they made to pride and luxury. Nay I wiſh ſome were not guilty of more then the diſproportion, even the total omiſſion of Charity, that in a multitude of Taylors bills cannot produce the account of one Garment for the poor, that amidſt the delicacies of their own diet (nay perhaps of their dogs too) never order'd ſo much as the crumbs of their Table to any hungry *Lazarus*. But let all ſuch remember, that there will come a time, when one of *Tabitha*'s coats, *Act.* 9. 39. will be of more value then all their richeſt Wardrobes, tho they could number Gowns with *Lucullus*'s Cloaks, which the *Roman* Story reports to be 5000; and that when their luxuri-

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ous fare ſhould only feaſt the worms, and render them paſſive in that Epicuriſm they acted before, they will wiſh they had made the bellies of the poor their refectory, and by feeding them nuriſhed themſelves to immortality.

11. LET this I ſay be ſeriouſly remember'd now, leaſt hereafter they fall under the ſame exprobrating remembrance with the rich man in the Goſpel, Luke 26. 25. *Remember that thou in thy life time receivedſt thy good things, and* Lazarus *that which was evil, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented.* A Text which St. *Gregory* profeſſes was ever ſounding in his ears, and made him look with ſuſpicion & dread upon that grandeur to which he was advanced, as fearing it might be deſign'd as his final reward. With what terror then may thoſe look upon their preſent good things, who by ingroſſing them wholly to themſelves, own them as their entire portion, and implicitly diſclaim their ſhare of the future? For to that none muſt pretend, who receive their tranſitory goods under any other notion, then that of a Steward or Factor: as we may ſee in the parable of the Talents, where thoſe that had the reward of the five and ten Cities, were not ſuch as had conſumed their Talents upon their own riot and and exceſſes, but ſuch as had induſtriouſly emploied them according to the deſign of their Lord.

And if it there fared ſo ill with the meer unprofitable ſervant, who had hoarded up his Talent, what ſhall become of thoſe, who ſquander away theirs, and can give no account either of Uſe or Principle?

12. WERE theſe conſiderations duly laid to heart, we might hope to ſee ſome of the Primitive Charity revive, when women of the Higheſt rank converted their Ornaments and coſtly Deckings into clothing for the poor, and thought no retinue ſo deſirable, ſo honorable as a train of Alms-folks. But I ſpeak improperly, when I make the poor their attendants, for indeed they rather attended the poor, did not only order the ſupply of their wants, but were themſelves their miniſters, waited about their ſick beds, dreſt their moſt loathſom ulcers, and deſcended to all the moſt ſervile offices about them.

13. BUT theſe were ſuch heights, ſuch tranſcendencies of mercy, as required a deeper foundation of Humility then will now be often met with; yet let me take the occaſion to ſay, that it may be a good managery of a charity to act (as far as they can) perſonally in it. For beſides that it prevents ſome abuſes and frauds, which deputed Agents may ſometimes be temted to, they pay God a double tribute in it of their perſons, as well as their fortunes. Next they bring themſelves into acquaintance with the poor, and by that means

means correct thoſe contemts and nice diſdains, which their own proſperity is too apt to create. Further yet, they excite their own compaſſion, which being a motion of the ſenſitive part of the mind, cannot be ſtirr'd ſo effectually by any thing, as by the preſence of the object; the moſt pathetic tragical deſcription of a diſtreſs, being not able to affect us half ſo much as one ocular demonſtration. Laſtly tis an apt means to increaſe their thankfulneſs to Almighty God, whoſe bounty to themſelves muſt needs make a deeper impreſſion, when tis compared with the neceſſitous condition of others. For things are beſt illuſtrated by their contraries, and tis too obſervable in our depraved nature, that we value not things by their real poſitive worth, but comparatively as they excel others, nor ever make a right eſtimate of what we enjoy, till our own or others wants inſtruct us.

14 Upon all theſe conſiderations it may be a very becoming uſeful circumſtance in any charitable miniſtery to be themſelves the actors; and to that end twill be a very commendable induſtry, to qualify themſelves to be helpful to the poor in as many inſtances as they can; not only opening their purſes, but diſpenſatories too, providing medicines for ſuch as either by diſeaſe, or caſualty want that ſort of relief. A charity which I doubt not is practiſed by many, and I wiſh it were by

by more, that our nicer Dames who ſtudy only Coſmetics for themſelves, would change the Scene, and inſtead of repairing or diſguiſing their own complexions, ſtudy the reſtauration of their decrepit patients limbs. And ſure, tho it be a leſs faſhionable, tis much a better ſight to ſee a Lady binding up a ſore, then painting her face; and ſhe will caſt a much ſweeter ſavor in Gods noſtrils, with the ſmell of unguents and balſoms, then with the moſt exquiſit odors and perfumes. For ſince God profeſſes, *Iſa.* 1. that that very *incenſe* which was deſign'd as a part of his worſhip *was an abomination to him*, becauſe not accompanied with the acts of Mercy, we cannot think he will better like of thoſe, which have no higher aim then delicacy and ſenſuality.

15. BUT beſides this part of mercy in Giving, there is another, that of Forgiving, which may happen to be of a larger extent then the former: for whereas that was confin'd to the poor, this has no ſuch limits, but as it is poſſible to be injured by perſons of all ranks, ſo this pardoning mercy is to reach equally with that poſſibility. This is that part of Charity which we peculiarly call Clemency, a Vertue which not only Chriſtianity but Morality recommends. The Ancient Romans had it in ſuch veneration, that they number'd it not only among Vertues but Deities,

ties, and built it a Temple. And they were ſomwhat towards the right in it, for it was, tho not God, yet ſo eminent an attribute of his, that nothing can more aſſimilate man unto him.

16. THERE are many Heroic acts of this kind to be met with among the vertuous Heathens. *Lycurgus* not only forgave *Alexander* who had ſtruck out his eie, but entertain'd him in his houſe, and by his gentle admonitions reclaim'd him from his former vicious life. *Ariſtides* being after ſignal ſervices, and without crime, unjuſtly baniſhed by his Citizens, was ſo far from acting, or imprecating againſt them, that at his departure from *Athens* he ſolemnly praied the Gods; that they might never by any trouble or diſtreſs be forced to recall him. So *Phocion* being unjuſtly condemned, left it as a ſolemn charge to his ſon *Phocas*, that he ſhould never revenge him. A multitude of the like examples might be produced, but we need not borrow light from their faint Tapers, when we have the Sun-beams, I mean the Sun of Righteouſneſs, our bleſſed Savior, who, as he has recommended this grace by his precept, ſo he has ſignally exemplified it to us in his Practice; the whole deſign of his deſcent to earth being only to reſcue his enemies from deſtruction. And as every part of his life, ſo the laſt Scene of it was particularly adapted to this

this end, and his expiring Breath expended in mediating for his crucifiers; *Father forgive them, Luk.* 23. 34. And this copy of his was tranſcribed by his firſt followers, the Primitive Chriſtians in their ſevereſt Martyrdoms praying for their perſecutors.

17 THUS are we, in the Apoſtles phraſe, *compaſſed about with a cloud of witneſſes*, Heb. 12. 1. of eminent examples, which ought to have a forcible influence upon all, but methinks ſhould not fail to have it on that Sex, whoſe native tenderneſs prediſpoſes them to the Vertue, and who need but ſwim with the ſtream of their own inclinations. How can we think that their melting eies ſhould ever ſparkle fire, or delight in ſpectacles of cruelty? that their flexible tender hearts ſhould turn into Steel or Adamant, be uncapable of all impreſſions of pity? Yet God knows ſuch changes have too often bin ſeen: women have not only put off that ſoftneſs peculiar to them, but the common Inſtinct of Humanity, and have exceeded not only ſavage men, but beaſts in cruelty. There have bin too frequent inſtances of the implacable malice, and inſatiable cruelties of women. I need not call in the aid of Poetic fiction, and tell them of *Clytemneſtra*, *Medea*, or the *Belides*, with hundreds of others, celebrated as inſtances of Heroic wickedneſs. There are examples enough in more authentic Stories, The Roman

man Tullia, the *Perſian Paryſatis*; and that we may not paſs by the ſacred Annals, *Jezebel* and *Athalia*. I forbear to multiply examples of this kind, of which all ages have produced ſome ſo eminent, as have render'd it a common obſervation, that no cruelty exceeds that of an exaſperated woman. And it is not much to be wonder'd at, ſince nothing can be ſo ill in its priſtine ſtate, as that which degenerates from a better. No enmity we know ſo bitter as that of alienated friends; no ſuch perſecution as that of Apoſtates, and proportionably no ſuch ferity as that of a perverted mildneſs. So that the Poets were not much out, who as they repreſented the Graces under the figures of women, ſo they did the Furies too. And ſince 'tis in their election which part they will act, they ought to be very jealous over themſelves. The declinations to any vice are gradual, ſomtimes at firſt ſcarce diſcernable; and probably the greateſt monſters of cruelty, would at the beginning have deteſted thoſe inhumanities which afterwards they acted with greedineſs.

18. IT concerns them therefore to ward thoſe beginnings whoſe end may be ſo fatal. She that is quick in apprehending an affront, perhaps will not be ſo quick in diſmiſſing that apprehenſion; and if it be permitted to ſtay, 'twill quickly improve: twenty little circumſtances ſhall be ſuborn'd to foment it with new

ſuſpicions, till at laſt it grow to a quarrel, from thence to hatred, from that to malice, and from that to revenge: and when that black paſſion has overſpread the mind, like an Egyptian darkneſs it admits no gleam of Reaſon or Religion, but hurries the enrag'd blindfold to their own ruin often as well as others.

19. LET none think this only a fancy or ſcheme of Diſcourſe: there have bin too many tragical experiments of its truth. How many men have bin mortally engaged upon no weightier original then the ſpleen of a woman? the frantic notion of honor among our Duelliſts fitly correſponding with the as frantic impulſes of feminine revenge, and any imaginary injury (or perhaps but juſt imputation) to the Lady, obliging her Gallant to ruſh upon the moſt real ſin and danger. A madneſs ſomthing beyond that which the Romances deſcribe of Knight Errantry: for that generally is for the relief of diſtreſſed Damſels, but this is only to humor the too proſperous ones, the inſolent and the proud. Thoſe therefore that have obſerved the common occaſions of Duels, have not unfitly divided them between Wine and Women; it being hard to ſay which is the moſt intoxicating and befotting. The Son of *Sirac* couples them together, *Eccluſ.* 19. 2. *Wine and Women will make men of underſtanding fall away.* The many modern examples of this miſchief,

miſchief, as they ſhould ſtrike an extreme terror into thoſe Women who have bin any way acceſſary to the death, or but danger of any man; ſo are they juſt matter of caution to all, ſo to regulate their Paſſions, that they never come within diſtance of Implacability; for if once they arrive there, themſelves can give no ſtop.

26. IN order to this, 'twill be well to conſider at the firſt incitation, what the real ground is: perhaps ſomtimes they are angry (as the Galatians were at St. *Paul*, *Gal.* 4. 10.) *at thoſe that tell them the truth*; ſome ſcandalous, or at leaſt ſuſpicious, behavior may have engaged a friend to admoniſh them; (an office that has ſomtimes proved very fatal: thoſe commonly that have moſt guilt having leſs patience to hear of it.) And if this be the caſe, 'tis the greateſt injuſtice in the world to make that a quarrel which is really an obligation: and therefore inſtead of maligning their Monitor, they ought to thank and reverence him. Nay, tho the accuſation be not with that candid deſign, but be meant as a reproch; yet if it be true, it ſhould not excite anger at their accuſers, but remorſe, and reformation in themſelves.

12. IT was the ſaying of a Wiſe man; that he profited more by his enemies then his friends; becauſe they would tell him more roundly of his faults. And this is excellently

improved by *Plutarch* in his Tract *Of the benefits to be reap'd from Enemies:* ſo that even a malicious accuſation may be a kindneſs, and conſequently ought not to be repaid with an injury. But ſuppoſe, in the laſt place, that the aſperſion be not only unkind, but untrue, it will not even then be ſafe to let looſe to their indignation. First, in reſpect of Prudence, an angry vindication ſerving the deſign of the enemy, and helping to ſpread the calumny; whereas a wiſe neglect and diſſembling do's often ſtifle and ſuppreſs it. Secondly in reſpect of duty, for all that own themſelves Chriſtians, muſt confeſs they are under an obligation to forgive, and not to revenge. Now if they intend to pay a real obedience to this Precept, 'twill be the more eaſie, the ſooner they ſet to it. He that ſees his houſe on fire, will not dally with the flame, much leſs blow, or extend it, reſolving to quench it at laſt. And anger is as little to be truſted, which if once throughly kindled, will ſcarce expire but with the deſtruction of the ſubject it works on.

22. LET therefore the diſoblig'd not look back upon the injury, but forward to thoſe miſchiefs which too ſharp a reſentment may betray them to: let them conſider, that the boiling of their blood may finally cauſe the effuſion of anothers, and wrath may ſwell into murder. If they would do this, and inſtead of

of thoſe magnifying optics wherein they view the wrong, make uſe of the other end of the perſpective, to diſcern the diſmal event at diſtance; it would ſure fright them from any nearer approch, would keep them within thoſe bounds which their duty preſcribes them, and thereby acquaint them with a much greater, and more ingenuous pleſure then their higheſt revenge can give them: I mean that of forgiving injuries, and obliging the injurious. This is a pleſure ſo pure and refin'd, ſo noble and heroic, that none but rational natures are capable of it; whereas that of Spight and Revenge (if it can be called a pleſure) is a mere beſtial one; every the moſt contemtible animal can be angry when 'tis moleſted, and endevor to return the miſchief.

23. It ſhould therefore, methinks, be an eaſy determination, whether to embrace that Clemency and Compaſſion which we ſee exemplified in the wiſeſt and beſt of men, nay in the omniſcient, Immortal God, or that ſavage fierceneſs of the ignobleſt creatures. This is certain, that no woman would be content to aſſume the outward form of any of thoſe: why then ſhould they ſubject their nobler part, the mind, to ſuch a transformation? For as there are no monſters ſo deformed, as thoſe which are compounded of man and beaſt; ſo among them all, nothing can

can be more unnatural, more odious, then a woman-Tiger. I conclude all with the advice of *Solomon*, *Prov.* 17. 14. *The beginning of ſtrife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention before it be medled with.* When once a breach is made upon the ſpirit by immoderate anger, all the conſequent miſchiefs will flow in, like a rapid ſtream when the banks are broken down; nor is there any way to prevent it but by keeping the mounds entire, preſerving that Tenderneſs and Compaſſion which God and Nature do equally inforce and recommend.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Of Affability.

1. IN the next place we may reckon Affability and Courteſie; which as it is amiable in all, ſo it is ſingularly ſo in women of Quality, and more univerſally neceſſary in them then in the other Sex. For men have often charges and emploiments which do juſtify, nay perhaps require ſomwhat of ſternneſs and auſterity; but women ordinarily have few or no occaſions of it, and thoſe who have well digeſted the former Lectures of Meekneſs and Compaſſion, will not be apt to put it on unneceſſarily. Now Affability may be conſidered either as a meer human Accompliſhment, or as a divine Vertue; in either notion 'tis commendable, but 'tis the latter that gives it the higheſt Excellence and Perfection.

2. To begin with the firſt notion of it, we may make an eſtimate of its worth by its Cauſe and by its Effects. For its Cauſe, it derives it ſelf either from a native candor and generoſity of mind, or from a noble and ingenuous Education, or ſomthing jointly from both; and theſe are as good Originals as any thing merely moral can flow from. And that theſe are indeed

indeed its ſources, common experience will atteſt: thoſe of the greateſt Minds, and beſt Extractions, being uſually moſt condeſcending and obliging; whereas thoſe of moſt abject Spirits and Birth, are the moſt inſulting and imperious. *Alexander* the Great, tho terrible in the field, yet was of a gentle, complaiſant converſation, familiarly treating thoſe about him: yet *Criſpinus*, *Narciſſus*, *Nymphidius*, and other enfranchiſed bond-men, we find inſolently trampling on the Roman Senators and Conſuls. 'Ts therefore a great error for Perſons of Honor, to think they acquire a reverence by putting on a ſupercilious gravity, looking coily and diſdainfully upon all about them; 'tis ſo far from that, that it gives a ſuſpicion, that 'tis but a pageantry of greatneſs, ſome muſhrom newly ſprung up, that ſtands ſo ſtiff, and ſwells ſo much. But inſtead of teaching others to keep their diſtance, this faſtidious diſdain invites them to a cloſer inſpection, that if there be any flaw either in their life or birth, 'twill be ſure to be diſcovered, there being no ſuch prying inquiſitor as curioſity, when 'tis egg'd on by a ſenſe of contemt.

3. ON the other ſide, if we conſider the effects of Courteſie, they are quite contrary; it endears to all, and often keeps up a Reputation in ſpight of any blemiſhes: a kind look or word from a Superior is ſtrangely charming, and inſenſibly ſteals away mens hearts from them.

them. This the Wiſe man refers to *Eccl. ſ.* 18. 16. when he prefers a word before a Gift. And 'tis *Plutarch*'s obſervation of *Cleomenes* King of *Sparta*, that when the Grecians compared his Affability and eaſineſs of Acceſs with the ſullen ſtate and pride of other Princes, they were ſo enamored with it, that they judged him only worthy to be a King. And as there is no certainer, ſo alſo no cheaper way of gaining love: a friendly ſalutation is as eaſie as a frown or reproch: and that kindneſs may be preſerved by them, which if once forfeited, will not at a far greater price be recovered.

4. BESIDES, when human viciſſitudes are conſidered, it may be a point of Prudence too; the greateſt Perſons may ſomtimes want aſſiſtance from the meaneſt; nay ſomtimes the face of affairs is quite changed, and the wheel of Fortune turns them loweſt that were uppermoſt, and proportionably elevates the meaneſt. 'Tis wiſdom therefore ſo to treat all, as to leave no impreſſions of unkindneſs, ſince none is ſo deſpicable, but may poſſibly at one time or other have an opportunity to retaliate. 'Twas therefore a prudent as well as an equitable reſolution of the Emperor, who ſaid he would ſo entertain the addreſſes of his Subjects, as, if he were a Subject, he would wiſh the Prince ſhould entertain him: a rule very worthy to ſway all Perſons of Honor in their entercourſe with others. And ſince even among Perſons

in Command there are degrees, and she which is superior to one, is inferior to another; they have a ready way to compare the civility they pay, with that they expect. Let therefore one who meets with a cold, neglectful Treatment from any above her, examin her own resentments, and then reflect, that if she give the like to those below her, they will doubtless have the same sense; and therefore let her resolve never to offer what she so much dislikes to bear: and she that do's thus, that makes such inferences, will convert an Injury into a Benefit; civilize her self by the rudeness of others, and make that ill nurture her own discipline.

5. But hitherto we consider Affability only in its ethnic dress, as it is a human ornament; 'twill appear yet more enamoring upon a second view, when we look on it as bearing the impress of the Sanctuary, as a divine Vertue. And that it is capable of being so, we have the autority of St. *Paul*, who inserts it in the number of those Christian Graces which he recommends to his Roman Proselytes; *Condescend to them of low estate*, Rom. 12. 16. And that we may the better discern its value, tis observable that he links it with the most eminent Vertue of Humility; for it immediatly follows his Precept of *Be not high minded*. Indeed tis not only joined with it as a Friend or Allie, but derived from it as its stock and Principle, and certainly

certainly a more divine extraction it cannot have, Humility being the *Alpha* and *Omega* of Vertues, that which laies the foundation (without which the moſt towring Structure will but cruſh it ſelf with its own weight) and that which perfects and conſummates the building alſo, ſecures and crowns all other Graces; which when they are moſt verdant and flouriſhing, are like *Jonas* his gourd, that may afford ſome ſhadow and refreſhment for a while, but are apt to breed that worm which will deſtroy them. When once they are ſmiten with Pride they inſtantly fade and wither; ſo neceſſary is Humility both for the acquiring and conſerving all that is good in us.

6. WE may therefore conclude, that Courteſie, and Obligingneſs of behavior which proceeds thence, is in reſpect of its ſpring and original, infinitly to be preferr'd before that which deſcends from no higher ſtock then natural or prudential motives. And ſince tis natural for every production to have ſome ſimilitude to it which produces it, we ſhall find it no leſs excellent in reſpect of its properties then its deſcent. I ſhall inſtance only in two, Sincerity and Conſtancy.

7. FOR the firſt, as far as Affability partakes of Humility, it muſt of Sincerity alſo, that being a vertue whoſe very elements are plainneſs and ſimplicity; for as it has no deſigns which want a cover, ſo it needs none of thoſe ſubtle-

ties and ſimulations, thoſe pretences and artifices requiſite to thoſe that do. 'Tis the Precept of the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 2. 3. *In lowlineſs of mind let each eſteem others better then himſelf:* where we ſee tis the nature of a lowly mind to transfer that eſteem to others which he ſubſtracts from himſelf: now where ſuch an eſteem is planted in the heart, it verifies all the expreſſions and outward ſignifications of reſpect, and renders the greateſt condeſcentions (which to an inſolent humor may ſeem extravagant and affected) real and unfeigned.

8. ON the contrary, that Courteſie which derives no higher then from meer human principles, is not much to be confided in. 'Tis the Pſalmiſts affirmation *that all men are liars:* and therefore there is more then a poſſibility of deceit in their faireſt ſhews. Sometimes we know ſmooth and plauſible addreſſes have bin deſigned as the ſtale to vile and trecherous practices. The extraordinary blandiſhments and endearing behavior of *Abſolom* to the people, was only to *ſteal their hearts*, and advance his intended rebellion, 2 *Sam.* 15. and *David* tells us of ſome, *whoſe words are ſofter then butter, having war in the heart, whoſe words were ſmoother then oil, and yet were very ſwords*, Pſal. 55. 21. and God knows this Age has not ſo much improved in ſincerity, that we ſhould think the ſame Scenes are not daily acted over among us.

9. BUT

9. But besides all the blacker projects of this kind, which nothing but the event can detect, there is a lower sort of this trechery, which is visible, nay so avowed, that it is one of the most common subjects of mirth and entertainment, I mean that of scoffing and derision, a thing too frequent among all, but I fear I may say very peculiarly among Ladies, those at least of the modish sort, their very civilities & caresses being often design'd to gain matter of scorn and laughter. Mutual visits we know are an expression of respect, and should flow from a real kindness, but if those now in use be sifted, how few will be found of that make? They are at the best formal, a tribute rather paid to custom then friendship, and many go to see those, for whom they are perfectly indifferent whether they find them alive or dead, well or sick. Nay very often they are worse then thus, design'd only to make observations, to bolt out somthing ridiculous wherewith to sport themselves as soon as they are gon; and least the inquest should return with a *non inventus*, they will accept of the slightest discoveries; the least misplacing of a word, nay of a hair shall be theme enough for a Comedy.

10. But if a poor Country Gentlewoman fall within their circuit, what a stock of mirth do's she afford them, how curiously do they anatomise every part of her dress, her meen, her

her dialect? nay perhaps to improve the Scene, will recommend yet greater abſurdities to her, under the notion of the Mode, that ſo ſhe may be the more ample ſubject of their ſcorn. Such viſits as theſe, are but inſidiuous intruſions of a ſpy rather then the good office of a neighbor; and when tis remembred how great a portion of ſome womens time is ſpent in this kind of diverſion, we muſt conclude there have a multitude of acts gon to make up the habit. I wiſh they would ſeriouſly reflect on it, and unravel that injurious mirth by a penitential ſadneſs, and either ſpend their time better then in viſiting, or elſe direct their viſits to better purpoſes. And this they would certainly, do if they would exchange their mere popular civilities (that kind of paint and varniſh in manners) for that true Chriſtian condeſcenſion, which admits of no deceit, but is as tranſparent as *Druſus* wiſht his houſe ſhould be, that has no ſecret ſcrues and ſprings, to move the eies or Tongue a contrary way from the heart, but is in reality all that it pretends to be.

11. A ſecond property of it is Conſtancy, for as it is true to others, ſo it is to its ſelf; 'tis founded on the ſolideſt of Vertues, and is not ſubject to thoſe light and giddy uncertainties; that the vulgar civilities are. For, he that out of a diſeſteem of his proper worth, has placed himſelf in a ſtate of inferiority, will

will think it not an arbitrary matter, but a juſt debt to pay a reſpect to thoſe he thinks his betters; and an humble mind will in every body find ſomthing or other to prefer to himſelf. So that he acts upon a fixt principle, and is not in danger of thoſe contradictions in his manners, which ſhall render him one day ſweet and affable, and another ſowre and moroſe. But ſuch mutations are frequently incident to thoſe who are ſwaied by other motives: ſomtimes an intereſt changes, and then the moſt fawning Sycophant can tranſplant his flatteries and court a new Patron, yea many times to the deſpight and vilifying of the old.

12. Somtimes again, fortune may change; a man may fall from a proſperous to an adverſe ſtate, and then thoſe who were prodigal of their civilities whilſt he needed nothing elſe, will withdraw even thoſe from him, leaſt they ſhould incourage him to demand ſomthing more. An experiment of this *Job* made in his friends (or rather flatterers) whom he fitly compares to winter brooks, running over when not needed, but quite dry when they are.

13. But the moſt frequent change is that of fancy and humor, which has a much more general ſway then reaſon and judgment. This is ſo obſervable in the vulgar rable, that often in an inſtant they will ſhift paſſions, and hate this hour what they doted on the laſt.

laſt. Of this all popular ſtates have afforded many coſtly experiments, but we need not go farther then the ſacred Story, where we find the Acclamations and *Hoſannahs* of the multitude, quickly converted into, *crucify him, crucify him.* This levity of mind has bin obſerved ſo incident to women, that 'tis become almoſt proverbial; for by how much their paſſions are more violent, they are commonly the leſs laſting: and as they are reckon'd among thoſe colder bodies that are particularly influenced by the Moon, ſo they ſeem to bear a great reſemblance to her in her viciſſitudes and changes; yet ſtill with a greater degree of uncertainty; for ſhe in all her revolutions obſerves ſome conſtant periods, and we can tell in her wain when ſhe will be at full; ſo that ſhe has a kind of certainty even in her planetary errors; but what Ephemerides can be framed for ſome womens humors? who can tell how long the preſent will laſt? and what will be the next that will ſucceed?

14. I need not bring inſtances of their inconſtancy from that common place of paſſionate widows, who have let a new love ſail even through thoſe floods of tears wherewith they bewailed the old: for (beſides that that is a caſe wherein poſſibly they may find matter enough for retortion) it is here a little wide from my purpoſe, which deſigns no farther

farther inquiſition then into their ordinary converſation, where in that love of variety which is ſo remarkable in their habit, their diet, their diverſions, extends it ſelf often to their company, their friendſhips alſo and converſe: Thoſe intimacies which they cheriſht lately, quickly grow deſpicable, and at laſt nauſeous, and conſequently their behavior falls from kind and civil, to cold and diſdainful. I doubt not this has often bin proved by many of thoſe humble companions, which officiouſly attend them, who cannot alwaies fix themſelves, no not by thoſe flatteries that firſt introduced them; ſome new comer perhaps has better refined the Art, and do's the ſame thing more acutely and ingeniouſly, and then the old one is to be turned off as too groſs a Sycophant; or if they have bin ſo happy as to light upon ſom of a more generous temper, who inſtead of a ſervile compliance with their humor, and high characters of their worth, entertain them with the true images of themſelves, and endevor to make what other only ſpeak them, this is that unpardonable crime which forfeits all degrees of favor, and do's not only avert, but incenſe. A faithful Monitor is as unacceptable as a true Looking-glaſs to a deformed perſon, which at the beſt will be ſet aſide, and eſcapes well if not broken; and while great perſons diſpence their favors or their frowns by ſuch perverſe meſures as theſe,

they will be ſure to do it unjuſtly as well as unconſtantly.

15. I am far from making this an univerſal charge, I know there are women of the higheſt quality, that guide themſelves by other rules, that are deaf to all the ſongs of *Syrens*, and have the prudence to value a ſeaſonable reproof before the moſt extravagant Panegyric; but this is owing to that humility which I am now recommending, without which 'tis as impoſſible for greatneſs to be proof againſt flattery, as it is for a Pinnace with ſpreading ſails, and a violent guſt of wind, to ſail ſteddily without ballaſt. And the frequent want of this is it, which makes it no leſs frequent to ſee thoſe unevenneſſes and inequalities in behavior; thoſe partialities in diſpenſing even the commoneſt civilities which I have now repreſented.

16. And ſure 'tis none of the meaneſt attributes due to that excellent vertue of humility, that it can thus fix and poiſe the mind, cure thoſe vertigoes and giddy humors, incident to thoſe who are mounted aloft: and, above all, that it is a ſure Antidote againſt the moſt inſinuating poiſon of flattery, a holy ſpel or amulet againſt the venem of a Parafite, which the Philoſopher juſtly calls the worſt of tame beaſts, as a Detractor is of wild: He being indeed a kind of Vulture, in the way of ſeizure, no leſs then ravine, who firſt picks out the eies of

of that which he deſigns to prey upon; ſuffering not the perſon concern'd to ſee any thing of that deſtruction which he is to feel. And certainly none of the ominous Birds, no night Raven or ſcrech-Owl can abode half ſo diſmally as theſe domeſtic Birds of prey, which are not only preſages, but inſtruments of ruine whereſoever they haunt.

17. THIS therefore the univerſal concern of thoſe that are great and proſperous, to chaſe them away, as *Abraham* did the Fowles from his Sacrifice, *Gen.* 15. 11. but yet more peculiarly ſo of thoſe to whom fortune has given a ſudden riſe, and unexpected grandeur, they being of all others the moſt obnoxious to this ſort of Harpies. The ſurprizes of proſperity do no leſs diſturb the judgment then thoſe of adverſity: and as one who is in an inſtant ſnacht up to ſome high Tower, is ſo amazed to ſee himſelf there, that he has no juſt meſure of the altitude, but thinks every thing farther below him then it is: ſo they that aſcend to greatneſs by ſwift and rapid motions, have their heads ſo turn'd that they are apt to overvalu it; & to look with contemt on thoſe whom before perhaps they thought worth their envy. And on a mind thus prepared, flattery may make any impreſſion, it ſuborning even Providence as a witneſs on its ſide, and inferring from the Dignities obtained, the tranſcending merit of the obtainer. A piece of Sophiſtry which

the ſlighteſt obſerver may eaſily confute, all Ages giving inſtances of thoſe whoſe Vices have preferred them, and by a ſtrange Chymiſtry have extracted Honour out of infamous acts. Yet to a mind poſſeſt with its own admiration, this ſhall paſs for a demonſtration. So trecherous a thing is Pride, that it combines with all who deſign to cheat us: and indeed 'tis not only an acceſſary, but the principal; none being in danger by others flatteries, who are not firſt ſeduced by their own.

18. IT will therefore be a point of Wiſdom for all Perſons of Honor to encreaſe their caution with their fortune, and as they multiply their Retinues without, ſo eſpecially to inforce their Guard within, that they become not ſlaves to their own Greatneſs, fix not themſelves in ſuch a poſture of State, as to become immoveable to all the offices of Humanity and Civility, nor think that their admiſſion to Greatneſs is upon the ſame terms on which the Jews were wont to receive their Proſelytes, that they muſt renounce all their former relations, but to remember that they differ no more from others, then as a counter ſet in the place of thouſands or hundreds, do's from one ſet in the place of tens or units. A little tranſpoſition may quite alter the caſe; or however, when they are all taken off the ſcore, they are then indiſcriminatly tumbled together, and one has no precedence of another, either

either in place or value. So undiſcernible will be the difference between the greateſt Queen, and the meaneſt Servant, when Death that great Leveller, ſhall have mixt them; there will be no inquiſition in the Grave who came embalmed, or perfumed thither; and as a Learned man ſaies, the Ulcers of *Lazarus* will make as good duſt as the paint of *Jezebel*.

19. But I ſhall be thought to have outrun my Subject, or inſtead of that amiable Image of Affability, and univerſal Obligingneſs, the great Ornament of Life, to introduce the grim figure of Death, that ſullen Executioner, whom no Gift, no praiers can mollify. Yet I cannot yield it wholly impertinent; for as its final ſtroke cures all the infirmities of the body, ſo the fore-ſight and contemplation of it is as much a Catholicon for all the maladies of the mind; eſpecially that of inſolence and diſdain. For ſure they cannot much pride themſelves in any exaltation, that remember they muſt finally fall into the duſt: nor arrogantly deſpiſe others, who conſider that themſelves ſhall one day be inſulted over by worms and inſects. Such mental deſcents into the vault or charnel-houſe, are the beſt diſciplines for the demeanor in other places, according to the admonition of the Wiſe man, *Remember thy end, and thou ſhalt never do amiſs.*

SECT.

SECT. V.

Of Piety.

1. LASTLY, To compleat and crown all other Excellencies, nothing is so proper, so necessary as Piety and Devotion. This is the salt which seasons all Sacrifices; yea, the Altar which sanctifies the Gift; no good (how splendid soever in the sight of man) being acceptable to God, till it be thus consecrated, and have this seal of the Sanctuary upon it. This is a Vertue truly Divine as well in its original as its end; for as it comes from Heaven, (is an affiation of the blessed Spirit) so it tends thither also, and thither raises its Votaries. This is it which sublimates and spiritualizes Humanity, defecates and refines it from all the dregs of mortality, and so wings our earthly lumpish nature, that we can soar aloft to the region of Spirits, and by its raptures make some essay of that state of separation, even while we are linked to the body. This is it which combines us so with God, that we have the same intereſt, the same choices; nay it do's in a sort communicate and enterchange proprieties with him; the All-powerful God seems impotent and unable

able to reſiſt its influence, whilſt it inveſts us feeble wretches in a kind of Omnipotency, by engaging him for us who can do all things.

2. Now this Piety may be conſidered either in a larger, or more limited ſenſe: in the former 'tis as wide as the whole ſcheme of Duty, not confined to any one act, but extended to all the commands of God. For as the animal ſpirit diffuſes its ſelf into all the moſt diſtant members of the body; ſo this more vital Principle has as univerſal an influence on the mind, ſtamps that with ſuch an admiration and reverence of God, ſuch a love and complacency in him, that every act is (at leaſt habitually) deſign'd to obey and glorify him.

3. In the more limited ſenſe, Piety is taken for our more immediate intercourſe with God in things purely divine, as Adorations, Praiers, Aſpirations, and all pantings and breathings of the ſoul after him; and in this notion 'tis more particularly called Devotion. And this is comprehended in the other, as a part in the whole; nay indeed, as an effect in its cauſe; for where Piety has not firſt formed and modeled the ſoul, there can be no true Devotion. External forms of it there may be, but that is but ceremony and pageantry, the moſt ſubmiſſive proſtrations are there but like that of *Dagon* before the Ark, the fall of a liveleſs trunk; the moſt elevated eies but a kind of convulſive motion; and the moſt rigid'

gid mortifications, but like the cuttings and launcings of *Baal's* Priests. Of this the very Heathen had some notion, and therefore in their worships had many preparatory ceremonies of lustration, and purifying, as being conscious of the incongruity, that unholy Persons should be admitted to Sacred things. And accordingly *Socrates* has excellently (I had almost said Evangelically) defined, *the best way of worshipping God*, to be *the doing what he commands*. Indeed without this, our Devotion is meer stratagem and design, we invoke God as we use to cajole men, only to serve a present turn; and of such disingenuous addresses, 'tis easie to read the event, or if we cannot, *Solomon* will instruct us, *Prov.* 15. 8. *The Praiers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.*

4. To treat of the several branches of Piety in the first notion, is not agreeable to the intended brevity of this Treatise, nor necessary, because there are so many distinct Tracts extant on that Subject; yet I shall the more closely to adapt it to my female Readers, observe the propriety of it to women, not only as it is their greatest ornament and advantage, but especially as they have somwhat more of prediſposition towards it in their native temper. Gods Laws which are the rule of Piety, have this common with men, that they are inforced upon us by the propoſals both of punishments

nithments and rewards, by that means engageing two of our moſt ſenſible paſſions, Fear and Love; and the female Sex being eminent for the pungency of both theſe, they are conſequently the better prepared for the impreſſions of Religion.

5. This is ſo much acknowledged, that our maſculine Atheiſts make an ill uſe of it, and are willing to think that Religion owes its force only to the impotence of the ſubject on which it works, that 'tis only an impoſition upon the eaſie credulity of women, and are content to allow them the incloſure of it; wherein, tho they ſufficiently ſhew their contemt of Piety, yet they unawares give a greater honor to that Sex then they intend, whilſt they confeſs it more capable of an aſſimilation to the ſupreme Goodneſs, and of the renewal of Gods Image (for to that all Piety is deſign'd) then their own. And therefore women have ſo little reaſon to be aſhamed, that they ought to glory in the conceſſion, and gratefully to celebrate the goodneſs of God to them, who, as he brings light out of darkneſs, ſo converts their natural infirmities into a means of a ſpiritual ſtrength, makes the impotencies and defects of their nature ſubſervient to the operation of Grace; and by conſecrating their very Paſſions, makes even thoſe Gibeonites ſerviceable to the Tabernacle. But then 'tis to be remembred, that the greater is their obligation

to comply with this design of Gods, to let their passions run in the channel he has cut for them; so to confine their Fear and Love to spiritual Objects, that they make no inordinate eruptions to any thing else, all their estimations of things dreadful or desirable, to give still the just deference to that which is eternal.

6. AND, as Women in general have this advantage towards Piety, and obligation to it; so particularly those of Quality, who we may suppose to have generally a more early institution and instruction in it then those of a meaner rank: and besides, have afterwards more opportunities of being built up in the knowledg of their duty, and (by the help of an ingenuous education) clearer apprehensions to discern it; and when they do so, have greater obligations to perform it, both in respect of God, of others, and themselves.

7. IN respect of God they have the greatest tie of gratitude, not only for the common mercies which they partake with the rest of mankind, but for those peculiar, by which they are differenced from others; of which, if they want a just value, let them ask themselves how willing they would be to part with them; how she that has fed delicatly, would like to be desolate in the street, or *she that has bin brought up in Scarlet, to embrace the Dunghil*, Lam. 4. 5, and according to the aversion they find to such a change, let them estimate their present

ſent enjoiment, and the thankfulneſs it exacts.

8. Secondly, in regard of others, their Piety backt with their ſecular advantages, may be of more extenſive benefit; they have many opportunities of doing good by their influence on others; or if no way elſe, yet the ſplendor of their example, will by the eminency of their conditions ſhine (as a light on ſome high Tower) more perſpicuoully, and guide many into the ſame path of Vertue. And certainly 'tis no ſmall obligation that lies on them in this reſpect; for God, who do's nothing without an end worthy of his wiſdom, can never be thought to have ſelected ſome perſons as the objects of his bounty, merely that they may ſwill and glut themſelves with ſenſual pleſures. No doubtleſs, he who is the great Maſter of the Univerſe, diſpoſes all things for common benefit; and therefore, if he have placed ſome in an higher Orb then others, it is that they may have an auſpicious influence on thoſe below them; and if they fail in this, they are no longer Stars but Comets, things of ominous and unlucky abode to all about them. I might enlarge on this Subject, but having don it already in the Gentlemans Calling, I ſuppoſe it unneceſſary, ſince that part is equally adapted to both Sexes.

9. IN the last place, they have all obligations to Piety, in respect of themselves, and that in two considerations; the first of their present danger; the second, of their final account. For their danger; 'tis evident they do not more out-number their inferiors in any thing then in the opportunities, nay solicitations to sin. Wealth and Honor have many snares, and which is worse, do often dispose the mind to such an heedless security, that it takes no care to avoid them: and as in the body, the diseases of repletion are far more numerous then those of emtiness, so the mind is oftner vitiated by affluence and prosperity, then by indigence and adversity. It becomes therefore those who are so surrounded with enemies, to fortifie themselves: and that they can no way do, but by a sincere Piety, that *whole armor of God* which the Apostle describes, *Eph. 6. 13. by which alone they may repel all the darts of temtations*; nay not only ward the blow, but wrest the weapon out of Satans hand, so that when he urges to them the opportunities, the impunity which their wealth and greatness gives them to be bad, they may retort his Argument, and by a wholsomer inference collect thence their great obligation to be good, and that not only upon the score of gratitude (tho that were enough to an ingenuous soul) but in the second place of interest also, in respect of that account

account they muſt finally give. For tho God be not an unjuſt exactor to reap where he has not ſown, yet he is not ſo negligently profuſe, as to do that which no prudent man will do, ſcatter his goods promiſcuouſly, without taking notice where they fall; but as he diſpences all things by a particular providence, ſo he do's it to a particular end, and will exact as particular an account how that end has bin complied with.

10. It is a ſmart exprobration of Gods to *Iſrael*, *Ezek.* 16, 17, 18, 19. that ſhe had ſacrilegiouſly emploied his *ſilver and gold*, *his oil*, *his flower and hony which he had given her*, *in the ſervice of her Idols*, by which as we may ſee he takes notice how we diſpoſe of our temporal poſſeſſions, ſo it ſhews us how the enditement will proceed againſt all thoſe who ſo pervert their uſe. With what confuſion muſt they appear at the great Audit, who can give no other account of their receits, but that they conſumed them upon their luſts, waged war againſt God with his own treſure, and bin as well thieves as rebels? What a Luciferian fall will they have from their honors, who have endevored to undermine Gods? thought themſelves too great to pay him homage, and by their profane and vicious example, induced a contemt of him? In ſhort, what a retaliation of inverſions will there then be? thoſe that have turned Gods grace into

into wantonneſs, converted his bounty into the fuel of their pride and luxury, ſhall then have their glory turn'd into ſhame, their riots and exceſſes into the want of a drop of water, and ſhall retain nothing of their greatneſs, but the guilt; the grating remembrance of having abuſed thoſe temporal bleſſings, which if well managed might have received them into everlaſting habitations. How neceſſary then is it for all who have receiv'd ſo much upon account, to be often reflecting on it, examining what charges the great owner has impoſed upon ſo ample an income? what God requires of them for whom he hath don ſo much? And this is particularly the buſineſs of Piety, which in all the fore-mentioned reſpects, is as the uſefulleſt, ſo the nobleſt accompliſhment of greatneſs.

II. AND ſuch it hath bin accounted till this profane Age of ours, which has removed all the boundaries of the former, reverſt even the inſtincts of nature, and will not leave us ſo much of Religion as had the very worſt of Heathens. For how erroneous ſoever they were in the choice of their Deities, they alwaies honor'd and reverenc'd thoſe they choſe, committed moſt of their enormities in obedience, not in affront to them: did not aſſign them votaries, as *Jeroboam* did his Prieſts, of the meaneſt of the people, but thought themſelves dignified by their ſervice, and eſteem-

ſteemed it in an infamy not to be pious. But alas now we adaies make other eſtimates; Religion is ſo abject, ſo contemtible a thing, as is thought fit to influence none that are great either in parts or quality: and therefore, tho too many are willing to appropriate it to women, upon the firſt account, *as the Goſpel is the fooliſhneſs of preaching*, 1 Cor. 1. 21. yet they make exceptions upon the latter, and are not willing to afford it any of the nobler Proſelytes even of that Sex.

12. I doubt not there are many Lectures read to ſuch, to fortify them againſt all impreſſions of Piety, to raze out the common notion of a God, and in order to that to depoſe his Vicegerent within them, diſcard their conſcience, that unmannerly inmate, which is ſtill ſpeaking what they have no mind to hear, and will be apt ſomtimes to queſtion their grand principle, and tell them they have ſouls. And truly 'tis no wonder if the abetters of Atheiſm take this courſe; for ſince they have no ſolid foundation of truth or reaſon, 'tis but neceſſary they ſupport their Party by Autority; the countenance and applauſe of Great Perſons: and God knows they have too much ſucceeded in the deſign. But, in the mean time what ſecurity do they give for the truth of their pretentions? We know 'tis ſtill required of thoſe that will practice upon other peoples concerns, that they put in caution to ſecure

cure the owner from dammage. But alas what gage can they give for a ſoul? Who can contrive a form of Indemnity where that is the thing hazarded?

13. 'Tis eaſie indeed for one of theſe Apoſtles of *Satan*, to tell a Lady that ſhe has nothing to do but to indulge to her pleſure; that 'tis the extremeſt folly to be frighted from a preſent enjoiment, by a fear of I know not what future ſmart; that God, and Sin, and Hell, are but names, certain Mormos and Bug bears conjur'd up by Divines, to work upon her fear, and abuſe her credulity. This, and much more of this kind may be ſaid, and I doubt often is; but all this while the queſtion is begg'd, and a ſtrong affirmation muſt paſs for proof: for I defy all the Doctors of Atheiſm to make any demonſtration of their Tenet; and yet tho they pretend to no Demonſtration themſelves, Religion muſt be condemned merely for the want of it: that is, for not making ſpiritual things liable to ſenſe, for diſtinguiſhing between Belief and Science; which is indeed for doing the moſt reaſonable thing in the world, *viz.* the remitting every object to the trial of its proper faculty, and they who ſuſpect it upon that account, may by the ſame kind of Logic wrangle us out of all our ſenſes, may perſwade us we hear nothing becauſe the eie diſcerns not ſounds, that we taſt not, becauſe the

the ear understands not gusts and sapors, and so on to the rest.

14. And yet this is the bottom of those Arguments which the great pretenders to Reason make against Religion; and in the mean time have so little ingenuity as to exclame on the light credulity of fools and women, that embrace the dictates of faith, whilst at the same instant they exact a more implicit assent to their negative Articles, their no Religion. A strange magisterial confidence so to impose on this Age, what is so universally contradictory to all former, and to the common verdict of mankind. For 'tis observable thro all the successions of men, that there were never any society, any collective body of Atheists. A single one might perhaps here and there be found (as we see somtimes monsters or mishapen births) but for the generality they had alwaies such instincts of a Deity, that they never thought they ran far enough from Atheism; but rather chose to multiply their Gods, to have too many then none at all: nay were apt to descend to the adoration of things below themselves, rather then to renounce the power above them. By which we may see that the notion of a God is the most indelible character of natural Reason; and therefore whatever pretence our Atheists make to ratiocination and deep discourse, it is none of that primitive fundamental reason coetaneous with

our humanity; but is indeed a reason fit only for those who own themselves like the beasts that perish.

15. BUT admit we could be more bountiful to them, and allow their opinion an equal probability with our Faith, yet even this could never justifie any body in point of Prudence, that should adhere to them. Common discretion teaches us, that where two propositions have an equal appearance of truth, there is no rational inducement to prefer one before the other, till we have examined the consequences, and find somthing in the one which may over-poise and outweigh the contrary. Now in all things that concern practice, there are no motives so considerable either to invite or avert, as Advantage or Danger.

16. LET us apply this to the present case, and examin the pretensions of the Atheist and the Christian in both respects. But first we are to remember, that both Advantage and Danger are to be viewed under a double notion either as present or as future. The former is the Atheists most proper subject, and indeed all that he can pertinently speak to, who professes himself only a man of this world. Here he will tell us that the disbelief of God and another life, is the great enfranchiser of mankind, sets us at liberty from that thraldom, those Bonds wherewith our superstitious fears had fetter'd us; that it supersedes all those nice and perplexing

perplexing inquiries of lawful and unlawful, and reduces all our inquisitions only to this one, how we shall most please our selves. The glutton need not put a knife to his throat, but is only to put an edg upon his palate. The drunkard need not refrain his cups, but only take care that they be filled with the most delicious liquor. The wanton need not pull out his eie, but only contrive to possess what that temts him to desire; and in a word none of our appetites need be restrain'd, but satisfied. And this uncontroul'd licentiousness, this brutish liberty, is that *summum bonum*, that supreme happiness which they propose to themselves, and to which they invite others.

17. ON the other side the Christian is not without his clame to a present advantage, tho of a far differing nature: he is not so prepostterous as to think it a preferment to sink below his kind; to aspire to an assimilation with mere animals, which is the utmost the former amounts to, but he proposes to himself the satisfaction of a man; those delights which may entertain his Reason, not his Sense, which consist in the rectitude of a well inform'd Mind. His Religion is the perfectest Scheme of Morality, and makes him a Philosopher without the help of Scholes: it teaches him the art of subduing his appetites, calming his passions, and in a word makes him Lord of himself; and by that gives him all the pleasures which result

from such a soveraignty. Nor is he totally void even of the pleasures of sense, which in many instances are greater to him then to those that most court them. Temperance cooks his coursest diet to a greater gust, then all their studied mixtures; Chastity makes one lawful embrace more grateful to him, then all the nauseating variety of their unbounded lusts; and Contentment swells his mite into a talent, makes him richer then the *Indies* would do if he desired beyond them. Nor is it a contemtible benefit, that his Moderation gives him an immunity from those sensitive pains which oft bring up the rear of inordinate sensual pleasures. So that his condition even set in the worst light, in that very particular wherein the Atheist most triumphs over him, is not so deplorable as 'tis represented.

18. BUT if it were, he has pleasures that would infinitly overwhelm that smart, and that not only in his reason (as hath bin said before) but in his more sublime diviner part, such irradiations from above, such antepasts of his future bliss, such acquiescence in a calm and serene conscience, as is very cheaply bought with all he can suffer here. I know the profane laugh at these things as Chimera's and the illusions of a prepossessed fancy: (and truly if they were so, they might yet come in balance with many of their pleasures which are as much owing to opinion and imagination

magination:) but if we conſider what ſupports they have given under the heavieſt preſſures, how they enabled the primitive Martyrs not only to ſuffer, but even to court all that is formidable to humane nature, we cannot think that a mere phantaſtic imaginary joy could deceive the ſenſe of ſuch real, ſuch acute torments. And tho in this great declination of Zeal, there be perhaps few that can pretend to thoſe higher degrees of ſpiritual raptures, yet certainly were the votes of all devout perſons collected, they would all concur in this teſtimony, that even in the common offices of Piety, the ordinary diſcharge of a good Conſcience, there is an infinitly greater complacence, a higher guſt and reliſh then in all the pleſures of Senſe. But of this the moſt irrefragable witneſſes are thoſe who from great voluptuaries have turned devotes; and I dare appeal to their experience, whether of the two ſtates is the moſt pleſant. I wiſh thoſe who will not believe this on other words, would themſelves make the trial, and till they do ſo they are notoriouſly unjuſt to pronounce that a fiction, of whoſe reality they refuſe to make proof.

19. By what hath bin ſaid, ſome eſtimate may be made which bids faireſt (the Atheiſt or Chriſtian) as to preſent temporal felicity: but alas what an allay, what a damp is it to felicity to ſay 'tis temporal; yet we may give it a

a term below that, and ſay 'tis momentary. For ſince our life is ſo, nothing that depends on that can be otherwiſe, and yet in this ſhallow bottom the irreligious embark their all. For, as to all future advantage, 'tis their Principle to diſclame it, they diſcern *no reward for blameleſs ſouls*, Wiſd. 2. 22. So that in this particular the Chriſtian do's not compare with, but triumph over them. *He knows that if his earthly houſe of this tabernacle be diſſolved, he hath a building of God; an Houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*, 2 Cor. 5. 1. That when he parts with his life, he do's not reſign his happineſs, but ſhall receive it infinitly improved both in degree and duration. And now certainly 'tis viſible enough which opinion propoſes the fairer hopes, and conſequently which (ſuppoſing but an equal probability of truth) is the moſt inviting.

20. BUT ſome ſpirits there are ſo ignoble, that the moſt glorious Prize cannot animate them; that like a ſwine, the muſcles of whoſe eies, they ſay, permit him not to look upward, is not concerned in all the felicities above, but would at a venture reſign his ſhare in thoſe, ſo he may ſecurely enjoy his husk and draff. But yet even thoſe who are uncapable of the more generous reſentments, may be apt enough to the more ſervile; and danger may fright, tho glory cannot allure them.

them. It concerns ſuch therefore to compare the miſchiefs which each Opinion threatens to their oppoſites, and from thence make an eſtimate which is ſafeſt to be choſen. And here let the Atheiſt himſelf caſt up the account of the dangers conſequent to Chriſtianity, and it can all amount but to this, the deprivation (or rather moderation) of ſome preſent ſenſual pleſures, or the incurring of ſome preſent ſenſitive pains; the former in the daily exerciſe of Temperance, and Mortification; the later, (more rarely and oftner in purpoſe then act) the ſuffering for righteouſneſs ſake. And both theſe the Chriſtian balances, nay out-weighs by two more important preſent hazards on the other ſide. To the former he oppoſes the danger of being enſlaved to the brutiſh part of a mans ſelf, a thing ſo deplorable even in the judgment of humanity, that all writers of Ethics have uniformly declared no ſervility to be ſo ſordid and intolerable, as that of the vicious man to his paſſions and Luſts. To the latter, he confronts the miſchief of being a ſlave to every man elſe, for ſuch he certainly is, whom the fear of ſuffering can baffle out of any thing he thinks juſt and honeſt. For if all the men in the World could ſucceſſively have the power to afflict him, they would alſo have to command and rule him; and what can be more abject, more below the dignity of human

man nature, then to have a ſpirit alwaies prepared for ſuch a ſervitude? Beſides even the utmoſt ſufferings which Chriſtanity can at any time require, is outvied daily by the effects of Luxury and Rage; and for one that has opportunity to be a Martyr for his God, thouſands become ſo to their Vices.

21. If from the preſent we look forward to future dangers, the Atheiſt muſt here be perfectly ſilent; he cannot ſay that the Chriſtian after this life ſhall be in any worſe eſtate then himſelf, ſince he concludes they ſhall both be the ſame nothing, but the Chriſtian threatens him with a more diſmal ſtate. He allows him indeed a being, yea an eternal one; but it is only ſuch as qualifies him for a miſery as eternal; the worm that never dies, the fire unquenchable, where all the exceſſes of his ſhort Pleſures ſhall be revenged with more exceſſive, endleſs Torments: his ſenſes which were here the only Organs of his felicity, ſhall then be (tho not the only) the very ſenſible mediums of his wretchedneſs; and that Conſcience which he here ſuſpended from its office, ſhall then take out its arrears, and return all its ſtifled admonitions in perpetual horrors, and deſperate upbraidings. I need not now ſure ask on which ſide the greater danger lies.

22. To conclude, the reſult of all is, that the tranſitory Pleſures of the Atheiſt are over-

poiſed

poiſed even by the preſent Satisfactions of the Pious. And the eternity of unbounded, unconceivable joies he expects hereafter, comes in *ex abundanti*, having nothing on the other ſide that offers at a competition with it. And at the very ſame rate of Proportion we have ſeen the dangers alſo are ſo, that we can eaſily compute the utmoſt miſchief our Chriſtianity can do us, if it ſhould be falſe; but the dammage of the other is ineſtimable, both for the penalty of Loſs and Senſe. I may now appeal to common Prudence to judg of the vaſt inequality, and to pronounce, that ſure there had need be ſome great evidence of truth on the Atheiſts ſide, to preponderate all theſe diſadvantages. Indeed, nothing much below a demonſtration can juſtify the choice of ſo dangerous Principles; I am ſure an equal probability can never do it, where the danger is ſo unequal; and were the verieſt Atheiſt conſulted in a ſecular caſe of the like circumſtances, he would certainly pronounce him a mad man that ſhould make ſuch an election. How deſperate a phrenſy then is it to do it, without ſo much as that equal probability: nay indeed, without any probability at all? And yet this madneſs ſets up for the monopoly not of Wit only, but Reaſon too; and by confidence and clamor, ſeeks to run down thoſe Arguments it can never confute.

22. I may be thought here to have made

too long a digreſſion from my proper Subject, but cannot confeſs it ſo; for ſince my preſent buſineſs is to recommend Piety, I can no way do that ſo effectually as by ſhewing its conſonancy to right reaſon, eſpecially conſidering the buſie induſtry now uſed to repreſent it under another form, and to alienate from it thoſe perſons, whoſe Greatneſs may give it any luſtre or repute in the World; of which ſort I ſuppoſe there are few more frequently attaqued then Women of Quality, that converſe among thoſe who call themſelves the Wits of the Age; who living in ſo infectious an air, had need of ſome antidotes about them; and if what I have now offered, appear not forcible enough, (for it pretends not to the tith of what may be ſaid on the Subject) yet it may at leaſt do them this ſervice, to put them in mind of what they need, and ſend them to the fuller diſpenſatories of others.

24. AND that is the thing I ſhould earneſtly beg of them, that they would be ſo juſt to their own intereſt, as not to combine with ſeducers againſt themſelves; but if they have bin ſo unhappy as to lend one ear unto them, yet at leaſt not to give up both to be forced in a ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion to their dictates, but hear what may be ſaid on the other ſide. And ſure 'tis but a low compoſition for God thus to divide with *Satan*; yet 'tis that of which his Emiſſaries

miſſaries are ſo jealous, that 'tis one of their grand Maxims, that none who profeſſes Divinity is to be adviſed with; and therefore by all Arts they are to be rendred either ridiculous, or ſuſpected; to which methinks may be applied that Fable (which *Demoſthenes* once recited to the *Athenians*, when *Alexander* demanded of them to deliver up their Orators) of the Wolves and the Sheep, who coming to a Treaty, the firſt Article of the Wolves was, that the ſheep ſhould give up their maſtives which guarded them: the reſemblance is too obvious to need a minute application.

25. BUT this is manifeſtly to reverſe all former Rules, and to truſt a man rather in any Faculty then his own, and would never have prevailed in any thing but where the ſoul is concern'd, that poor deſpicable thing, whereon alone we think fit to make experiments. 'Tis ſure, that if any ſhould diſpute their title to an earthly Poſſeſſion, they would not ſo tamely reſign it, nor would truſt their own ſelves in its defence, but would conſult their ableſt Lawyers, and by them, ſift out every circumſtance that might eſtabliſh their clame. Why ſhould they then ſuffer themſelves to be talk'd out of an Heavenly inheritance, without ſo much as once propoſing their doubts to thoſe whoſe ſtudy and profeſſion it is to reſolve them? But as in all other ills, ſo in this, prevention is better then cure; and therefore

to thoſe that are yet untainted, the ſecureſt courſe will be to ſtop their ears againſt all profane inſinuations; and to uſe thoſe who temt them to be diſloial to their God, that ſpiritual adultery, as they ſhould do thoſe who ſolicit them to the carnal, not ſo much as to enter parly, but with the greateſt indignation deteſt and reject them. 'Tis the ſaying of the Wiſe man, *Prov.* 25. 23. that *an angry countenance driveth away a back-biting tongue.* And certainly, would Great Perſons look ſeverely on ſuch defamers of Religion, they would give ſome check to that impudence of profaneneſs which has given it ſuch a vogue in the World.

26. AND ſure this is much their Duty to do, if they own any relation to that God who is ſo diſhonored. They would think it a very diſingenuous thing to ſit by to hear a Friend or Benefactor reviled, and expreſs no diſpleſure; and is God ſo friendleſs among them, that only his traducers and blaſphemers can be patiently heard? Among the Jews, at the hearing of any blaſphemy, they rent their clothes; but I fear we have ſome of our nice Dames that would be much more concern'd at a rip in their garment, then at the rending and violating Gods Sacred Name; and could more patiently behold the total ſubverſion of Religion, then the diſorder or miſplacing a lock or riband. But 'tis to be hoped

hoped there are not many ſo impious; and thoſe that are not, will ſurely think themſelves obliged with all their power, to diſcountenance all the Fautors of irreligion, whether they be the ſolemn ſedater ſort, that would argue, or the jollier, that would rally them out of their Faith.

27. BUT when they have thus provided againſt the aſſaults of others, and ſecured the ſpeculative part of Religion, they have only eſtabliſhed a Judicatory againſt themſelves, ſtored up matter of Conviction and Accuſation, if they anſwer it not in the practic. I muſt therefore after this long excurſion, return to my firſt Point, and beſeech them ſeriouſly to weigh the obligations they have to Piety in the general notion of it; as it comprehends all the duties of a Chriſtian life; of which as I intend not to ſpeak particularly; ſo I know not where to find a better ſummary, then that which St. *James* has drawn up, *Chap. 1. verſ. 27. Pure Religion and undefiled before God even the Father is this, to viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the world.*

28. BUT beſides this general, there is (as I ſaid before) another more reſtrained notion of Piety, as it relates to our more immediat entercourſe with God in divine Ordinances and Worſhip; in which reſpect it commonly paſſes under the name of Devotion, and thus conſider'd

consider'd it has a great propriety to the female Sex. For Devotion is a tender Plant, that will scarce root in stiff or rocky ground, but requires a supple gentle soil, and therefore the feminine softness and pliableness is very apt and proper for it. And accordingly there have bin very eminent growths of it in that Sex. I need not heap up examples of former Ages, but rather perswade this to leave some at least to the following, and the more considerable the persons are, the more conspicuous will be the example, which seems the more to adapt it to those I now speak to. Devotion in a Cloister is as recluse as the Votary, a light rather under a bushel then on a candlestic: and in an obscure Cottage 'tis either not observed, or else thought to be but the effect of destitution and secular wants, a reserve rather then a choice: but when those who are in the eie of the world, the most eminent Actors on the Theater of human life, shall chuse the part of a Saint, when those who want none of the divertisments or blandishments of earth, shall have their conversation in Heaven, this recommends it to the Spectators, as the true and greatest object of human choice; since 'tis chosen by those who know the utmost pretence of all its competitors.

29. NOR is devotion only more excellent in them in regard of its effects, but 'tis also more

more neceſſary in reſpect of their obligation. Devotion is an abſtraction from the World, and therefore cannot in any eminent degrees be practiſed by thoſe whoſe neceſſities or buſineſs do much entangle them in it. So that from ſuch, a far leſs proportion will be accepted, then from thoſe, whoſe plenty and eaſe give them no other want but that of emploiment. And certainly if there be any of whom that can truly be ſaid; Women of quality are the perſons: for they in this reſpect exceed even men of the like rank: for the men are often engaged in public emploiments, and muſt lend moſt of their time to the uſe of others; or however all have the care of their own privat affairs, the managery of their fortunes to employ them. But of women the utmoſt that is ordinarily required, is but a little eaſie inſpection within their own walls, the overſight of a few children, and ſervants, and even from this how many are by their condition of life exemted? and how many more do by their niceneſs and delicacy exemt themſelves? And ſurely ſo perfect a vacancy is neither happy nor ſafe. And therefore God who projects we ſhould be both, never deſign'd it for any of mankind: but where he gives ſo much liberty from ſecular, he expects a greater diligence in ſpiritual emploiments.

30. And indeed 'tis an amazing thing to ſee, that any into whom he has breathed the breath

breath of life, on whom he has ſtamped the image of his own eternity, can think thoſe immortal ſouls were given them only to ſerve the mean and abject uſes of their corruptible bodies, (for which the ſoul of the dulleſt Animal would have don as well;) that eating and drinking, ſleep and recreations, which are only uſeful to the ſupporting us in this world, are the only things for which we were ſent hither. And yet if we may meſure their opinions by their practice, this ſeems to be the perſwaſion of many of our female Gentry, who look upon it as a degrading, a kind of attainder of their blood, to do any thing but pleaſe their ſenſes. An error ſure of the moſt pernicious conſequence imaginable. We know a Lady of pleſure is in one ſenſe a very ſcandalous Epithet, and truly 'tis no very laudable one in the other, nay which is worſe, they are often coincident, and fall in with each other. She whoſe ſole univerſal aim is pleſure, will not think her ſelf much out of the road, in the purſuit of any particular. And ſhe that thinks ſhe lives for no other purpoſe, will ſo often be at a loſs for innocent pleſure, that ſhe is almoſt under a neceſſity to call in the nocent, to ſerve the very end (as ſhe ſuppoſes) of her being. But indeed were they ſure to confine themſelves to ſuch as are harmleſs in their kind, yet the exceſs of them renders them ſinful, and the doting purſuit denominates them *lovers of*

of Pleasures more then lovers of God, a character so black, that the Apostle compleats his Catalogue of the worst of vices of the worst times with it, 1 *Tim.* 3. 4.

31. It is therefore the great goodness of God to design a rescue for those whose condition exposes them to that danger, and by exacting a liberal expence of time in their devotion, divert them from lavishing both it and their souls together. Neither do's he by this defeat their aim of a pleasant life, but rather assist it: for whereas sensual delights are vagrant, and must be chased through a hundred turnings & wild Mazes, the spiritual are fixt, and one may alwaies know where to find them. How often are the voluptuous in pain to know which pleasure to chuse? like a surfeited stomac, the greater variety is set before it, the more it nauseats all. What difficulties hath a Lady many times to resolve whether an after-noon shall be spent at Court, or at the Theater? whether at dancing or at cards, in giving or receiving Visits, as not knowing which will best please her? But she that knows the delights of Devotion, knows withal that there is no other fit to come in competition with it; and so is not distracted in her choice, nor needs go farther then her Closet for the most agreeable entertainment. I know this will sound a little incredible to those that know no other use of Closets, then as a Conservatory of gauds and

baubles; that aſpire to no pleſure there above that of children, the playing with Pictures and Pupets that adorn it. Nor indeed do I pretend that ſuch ſhall find thoſe ſatisfactions I ſpeak of. Thoſe whoſe errand is to *Beelzebub* the God of flies, muſt not expect to be treated by the God of *Iſrael*. An ingenious man will ſcorn to obtrude himſelf on thoſe who deſire not his company, and ſure God will not make himſelf more cheap. Thoſe that will meet him in their Cloſets, muſt come with that deſign, reſort thither as to an Oratory; nay more then ſo, they muſt come frequently. Spiritual joies know not the way to a place where they are not often invited: and as men ſeek not for each other in places where they ſeldom or never come, but where they daily frequent; ſo God contrives, not to meet us in that place where we appear rarely and accidentally, but where we uſually reſort.

32. I ſhall not need to branch out devotion into the ſeveral parts, that being don already in a multitude of other Treatiſes, of which, if they pleaſe to conſult any one, they cannot want a Directory for their Worſhip, whether private or public. Only let me obſerve the order and connexion of thoſe two, that they are neither to be ſever'd, nor yet to be ranged prepoſterouſly. The privat muſt not juſtle out the public, for God expects his ſolemn homage

mage: and their hudling it up in privat, as it may give men ground to ſuſpect they pay none at all, ſo neither God nor man can collect any thing better from it, then that they are aſham'd of the Deity they pretend to ſerve. On the other ſide, the public muſt as little ſwallow up the privat, and where it do's, there may be a juſt doubt of its ſincerity. Many attractives there may be to Church beſides that of Piety, and indeed where that is really the motive, it teaches ſo much reverence to that awful preſence they are to approch, as not to come without ſome preparation. What ſolicitude, what critical niceneſs will a Lady have for her dreſs, when ſhe is to appear at a ſolemn meeting at Court? and ſhall ſhe take no care how ſordidly, how undecently ſhe appear when the King of Kings gives audience? Shall many hours, daies, nay perhaps weeks, be taken up in contriving for the one, and ſhall there never be a minute allotted for the other? This ſure were very unequal, and yet this is the caſe where the devotion of the Cloſet do's not prepare for that of the Church. If the mind be not firſt tuned there, it will be very ill qualified for that harmony of Souls, which is the only thing God regards in our public offices. So that were there no other uſe of privat Devotion, but as it relates to the public, that were enough to ſpeak the neceſſity of it.

33. BUT indeed 'tis not only a needful preparative to that ſacred commerce, but to our civil. The World is but a larger ſort of Peſt-houſe, in every corner of it we meet with infectious airs, and thoſe that converſe in it had need of this antidote. How many temptations do's every place, every hour, every interview, preſent to the ſhocking even of that moral integrity which a ſober Heathen would judg fit to preſerve, much more of that ſtrict Piety our Chriſtianity exacts?

34. TWAS the Obſervation that *Origen* made of himſelf, that the day in which he ſo ſhamefully fell by ſacrificing to Idols, he had ventured out in the morning before he had compleated his uſual Praiers; the Devil finding him ſo unarmed took advantage to aſſault him, as knowing he had then but a ſingle impotent man to wreſtle with, who had forfeited, by not invoking, the protection of God. And indeed, ſince praier is the moſt powerful exorciſm to eject him; we may well conclude, the omiſſion of it is a likely means to invite him: for if God have not the prepoſſeſſion, if we do not by hearty praier ſurrender our Souls to him in the morning, they are then all the day after like that emty houſe mention'd in the Goſpel, a fit receptacle for as many evil ſpirits as pleaſe to inhabit there. Nor are theſe ſpiritual the only dangers that attend us, we are liable to a multi-

multitude of ſecular ones alſo: our perſons, our Fortunes, or Reputations, every thing wherein we can receive a benefit, renders us equally capable of a prejudice. What multitudes of accidents are there to which we lie open, and nothing to guard us from them but the Divine Providence? which if we neglect to ſolicit, we are ſure very unworthy of its defence. And this is a conſideration that methinks ſhould bring even the moſt ſenſual perſons upon their knees: for tho too many may be found that deſpiſe the former danger, and can contentedly enough expoſe their Souls, yet ſuch are uſually the moſt tender of their temporal concerns, it being commonly the exceſſive love of thoſe which makes them neglect the other. She that fears not the fall into ſin, will yet fear the tumbling into a precipice, and tho ſhe care not for the ſpotting of her innocence, would be very loth any accident ſhould blemiſh her Face, diſparage her Fame, or impoveriſh her Fortune, and yet from any or all of theſe ſhe is utterly unable to guard her ſelf. So that if Piety will not, yet intereſt methinks ſhould render her an homager to that omnipotent Power, from whence alone ſhe can derive her ſafety.

35. And now methinks a Duty that is thus bound on with the cords of a man, with Human as well as Divine perſwaſives, ſhould not eaſily be ſhaken off. I wiſh I could ſay it

it never is, but I fear there are ſome of thoſe I now ſpeak to, who neglect it in ſpight of all theſe inducements; who tho they can pretend nothing ſerious enough to own the name of buſineſs, do yet ſuffer a ſucceſſion of I know not what impertinencies to divert them. And indeed, were the expence of ſome Ladies daies calculated, we ſhould find every hour ſo full of emtineſs, ſo over-laden with vanities, that 'tis ſcarce imaginable where an office of devotion ſhould croud in.

36. THE morning is divided between ſleep and dreſſing; nor would the morning ſuffice, but that they are fain to make a new computation to meſure it, not by the Sun, but by their time of dining, which is often as late as the ſtationary hours of the Primitive Faſts, tho upon a far differing motive. The afternoons being by this means reduced, are too ſhort for thoſe many divertiſements that await them, and muſt therefore borrow as much of the night as they lent to the morning. And when the mere fatigue of pleſures ſends a Lady to her reſt, 'tis not imaginable that ſhe will permit Devotion to induce a yet greater and more diſagreeable laſſitude, ſo the whole round of her time ſeems to be a kind of Magic Circle, wherein nothing that is holy muſt appear. And indeed, 'tis one of the higheſt ſtratagems of *Satan* thus to foreſtal their time; and by

by a perpetual ſupply of diverſions, inſenſibly ſteal from them the opportunities of Divine Offices; an artifice by which I preſume he prevails on ſome, who would ſtartle at his groſſer and more apparent temtations.

37. Nor needs he more then the ſucceſs of this project; for if this habitual neglect of Piety ſhould not finally end in great and criminal commiſſions (as 'tis naturally very apt to do) yet his intereſt is ſufficiently ſecured by ſuch a cuſtomary omiſſion, which amounts to no leſs then the living *without God in the World*: a ſtate ſo hopeleſs, that when the Apoſtle recollects to the *Epheſians* the wretchedneſs of their *Gentile* State, he do's it in thoſe very words, *Eph.* 2. 12. And ſure, thoſe that live ſo under Chriſtianity, are not in a better, but worſe condition, by how much contemt of God is more unpardonable then ignorance.

38. It therefore infinitly concerns thoſe who are in danger of ſo fatal a ſnare, to look about them, and endevor to countermine *Satan*, and be as induſtrious to ſecure their duty, as he is to ſupplant it; and to this purpoſe, one of the uſefulleſt expedients I know, is to be afore-hand with him; I mean, to make their Devotions the firſt buſineſs of the day; by which I intend not only thoſe Ejaculations wherewith we all ſhould open our eies, but their moſt ſet and ſolemn Praiers; a practice ſo highly expedient to the perſons fore-

fore-mentioned, that it falls little ſhort of neceſſary; and that upon ſeveral reaſons.

39. FIRST, in relation to one of the great ends of Morning Praier, which is to ſupplicate the guidance and protection of God for the whole day. Now if this be not don till ſome Ladies Dreſſings be finiſhed, 'twill be half a mockery, a moſt prepoſterous requeſt, as to the greateſt part of the day, which will be paſt before; and beſides the abſurdity, there is danger in it; for all the preceding time is as it were out-lawed by it, put from under the Divine Protection. Alas, are God's ſafeguards to be only meridional, to ſhine out only with the noon-day Sun? Do they ſuppoſe *Satan* keeps their hours, and ſtirs not abroad till the after-noon, that there is no danger either of corporal or ſpiritual miſchiefs before that time of the day? Certainly, if *the noiſe of the harp and the viol* which *Iſaiah* mentions, *Chap.* 5. 12. do not drown it, they may often hear a morning as well as evening Paſſing-bell. With how many others do's the Glaſs of Life run out, whilſt they are at their Looking-glaſſes? How many bodies are maimed and wounded in the time they are trimming and decking theirs? And *who made them differ from others*, 1 Cor. 4. 7? Or what tenure have they in the ſafety of one moment, ſave what they owe to God's Providence? And what rational expectation can they

they have of that, when they do not invoke it?

40. Nor are the ſpiritual dangers leſs, but rather much more, and they muſt be very ſlight obſervers of themſelves, if they do not diſcern that ſnares may be laid for them in their receſſes in their Chambers, as well as in places of the moſt public reſort. Indeed, were there no other then what relates to their dreſs, and curioſity thereof, it were enough to evidence their danger; ſcarce any part of that but carrying a temtation in it: to Pride, if it hit right, and pleaſe their fanſie: to Anger and Vexation, if it do not. They had need therefore to put on their armor before their ornaments, by a prepoſſeſſion of Praier and Meditation to ſecure their vitals, leſt by an internal death of Grace, their bodies (in their utmoſt luſter) prove but the painted Sepulcher of their ſouls.

41. In the ſecond place, this appears requiſit in oppoſition to the indecency and incongruity of the contrary. How inverted an eſtimate do they make of things that poſtpone the intereſt of their ſouls, to the meaneſt member of their bodies, pay a ſupererogating attendance to the one, before the other comes at all into their care. But what is yet worſe, how vile a contumely is offered to the Majeſty of God, who is uſed as they do their dunning Creditors, poſted off with an excuſe

of no leſure yet to ſpeak with him; whilſt in the mean time all the factors for their vanity can have ready acceſs and full audience. God muſt wait till their Tailer, their Shoo-maker pleaſe to diſmiſs them, and at the beſt, can be allowed only to bring up the rear of whole ſhole of Artificers.

42. BUT thirdly, 'tis very doubtful whether he ſhall obtain ſo much from them; for it may often happen that he ſhall be quite precluded, ſo numerous are the parts of a modiſh equipage, and ſo exact a ſymmetry is required in the whole, that 'tis the buſineſs of many hours to compleat it; when as 'twas ſaid of the Roman Ladies, a Council muſt be called about the placing of an hair that ſits irregularly, when one thing after another ſhall be tried, and again rejected, as not exact, or not becoming; time all the while inſenſibly ſteals away, and tho that will not ſtay for them, yet dinner doth, and then their bellies begin to murmur to pay any longer attendance on their backs, and clame the next turn; and between theſe two competitors, 'tis odds Devotion will be quite excluded, or reduced only to a Grace before meat: (and well if that, conſidering how unfaſhionable even this is grown) in the mean time, what a wretched improvidence is it, to reduce the one neceſſary buſineſs of the day to ſuch uncertainties, nay almoſt to a certain diſappointment?

43. YET

43. Yet ſuppoſe this hazard were only imaginary, and a Lady were infallibly ſure not to loſe the time for her Praiers; yet in the fourth place, ſhe will be likely by ſuch preceding diverſions to loſe much of her zeal in them, ſo that if they be ſaid at all, they will ſcarce be ſaid in a due manner. There is alas ſuch a repugnancy in our nature to any thing ſpiritual, that we cannot cloſe therewith in an inſtant; but as a benummed, frozen body will need ſome rubbing and chafing before it can be fit for motion; ſo our more frozen ſouls require ſome previous incitations before they can with any vigor exert themſelves in Devotion. Now ſure the dreſſing time (I mean ſuch a dreſſing as we now ſuppoſe) is not very proper for ſuch preparations. 'Tis, on the contrary, extreme apt to indiſpoſe and unfit them; for when the fanſie is poſſeſt with ſo many little Images of vanity, they will not eaſily be ejected. That ranging faculty is, God knows, too apt to bring in even the remoteſt diverſions; but when it has ſuch a ſtock ready at hand, how will it pour them in upon the mind, to the great allaying, if not utter extinguiſhing of Devotion?

44. When all theſe Conſiderations are put together, 'twill ſure appear wholſom counſel, that ſuch perſons ſhould not truſt ſo important a Duty to ſo many caſualties, but in the firſt place ſecure a time for that, repair to

their Oratory before their dreſſing-room, and by an early conſecration of themſelves to God, defeat *Satans* clame, and diſcourage his attemts for the reſt of the day. We know there is a natural efficacy in a good beginning towards the producing a good ending: but in Spiritual things the influence is yet greater, becauſe it draws in Auxiliaries from above, and engages the yet farther aſſiſtances of Grace. Upon which account I am apt to believe, that where this duty is ſincerely and fervently performed in the morning, it will not totally be neglected in the ſucceeding parts of the day. 'Twill be eaſie to diſcern the ſame obligation, the ſame advantage of cloſing the day with God, that there was to begin it; and when thoſe two boundaries are ſecured, when thoſe are look'd upon as ſtrict duty, and conſtantly obſerved, 'tis not unlikely but their Piety may grow generous, and with *David*, *Pſal.* 55. 17. add to the *evening and morning a noon-day office*; for where Devotion is real, 'tis apt to be progreſſive; and the more we converſe with God, the more we ſhall deſire to do ſo. Thus we ſee how this little cloud, like that of *Elijah*, 1 *King.* 18. 44. may *over-ſpread the Heavens*, and this handful of firſt-fruits may hallow the whole day.

45. NAY indeed, when it has advanced thus far, 'twill probably go farther: 'twill not keep it ſelf only on the defenſive part, but invade its

its oppoſites, get daily ground of thoſe vanities by which it was before oppreſt. For when a Lady has in her Cloſet waſht her cheeks with penitential Tears, ſhe cannot ſure when ſhe comes out, think them prepared for the varniſh of the paint and *fucus*. When ſhe has attentively examined her Conſcience, that impartial mirror, and there diſcern'd all the blemiſhes of her nobler part, ſhe will ſure, with ſomwhat a more cold concern, conſult her Looking-glaſs. And when ſhe has by pious vows and reſolutions *put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. 13. 14. 'twill be impoſſible for her to be very anxiouſly careful about her garments. This devout temper of her mind will by a holy *leger-demain* ſhuffle the Romances out of her hand, and ſubſtitute the Oracles of Truth; will not let her dream away her time in phantaſtic ſcenes, and elaborate nothing, but promt her *to give all diligence to make her calling and election ſure*. In a word, when ſhe once underſtands what it is to ſpend one hour devoutly, ſhe will endeavor to reſcue all the reſt from trifles, and impertinent entertainments; & employ them to purpoſes more worthy the great end of her being. Thus may ſhe almoſt inſenſibly wind her ſelf out of the ſnare, diſintangle her ſelf from thoſe temtations wherewith ſhe was enwrapt; and by having *her heart ſo ſet at liberty, may run the waies of Gods Commandments*, Pſal. 119.

46. But

46. But privat Devotion, tho of excellent effect, cannot commute for the omiſſion of public; nor indeed can it long maintain its vigor, unleſs ſomtimes cheriſhed by the warmth of Chriſtian Aſſemblies; and if God pleaſe to viſit them in their Cloſets, they are even by their own Laws of Civility obliged to return his Viſits, and attend him in his Houſe. I fear too many adapt the inſtance in the formality too, and come as unconcernedly to him as they do to one another. 'Tis true, thoſe that pay him a cordial Reverence at home, will certainly do it at the Church, and therefore by the little we ſee performed by ſome there, we may doubt God ſees as little in their Retirements. But what ſpeak I of an hearty Reverence, when 'tis viſible that there are thoſe that pay none at all? How rare a ſight is it for ſom Ladies to appear at Church? How many times (I had almoſt ſaid hundreds) do we ſee their Coaches ſtand at the Play-houſe, for once at Gods? They ſeem to own no diſtinction of daies, unleſs it be, that Sunday is their moſt vacant ſeaſon to take Phyſic, or to lie a-bed; and if ſuch do ever come to Church, Devotion is like to be the leaſt part of their errand; ſome new Garment perhaps or Dreſs is to be ſhewed, and that thought the place where the moſt critical Judges of thoſe things will be moſt at leſure to obſerve them; or if they come not to teach new Faſhions, it may

may be they come to learn, and such Documents will be surer to be put in practice, then any in the Sermon. Possibly they expect to see some Friend or Acquaintance there, and as if Christ were to be served (as he was born) in an Inn, make his House the common rendezvouz in which to meet their Associates. If they have any more ingenious attractives, 'tis commonly that of curiosity, to hear some new celebrated Preacher, and that rather for his Rhetoric then his Divinity; and this Motive (tho the best of the set) is but like that which prevail'd with those *Jews* St. *John* mentions, who came to *Jesus that they might see Lazarus*, John 12.

47. I shall not rank among these Motives, that of Hypocrisie and seeming Holiness, for from that all the rest do acquit them. Indeed 'tis the only sin which this Age has seemed to reform, and that too only by way of *Antiperistasis*, not by the Vertue, but the Iniquity of the Times. Religion is grown so unfashionable, so contemtible, that none can now be temted to put on so ridiculous a disguise. And altho as to single persons I confess Hypocrisie one of the deepest Guilts, such as has a peculiar portion assign'd it by Christ in the place of torment, *Matth.* 24. 51. yet as to Communities, I cannot but think it better to have a face of Religion then Profaneness. The example of the former may work beyond its self, and

and the form of Godlineſs in ſome, may produce the power of it in others; but a pattern of Profaneneſs, the farther it operates, the worſe, and all the progreſs it can make, is from one wickedneſs to another, ſo that I fear as St. *Bernard* wiſht for his Feaver again, ſo the Church may ere long for her Hypocrites.

48. But to recal my ſelf from this digreſſion, let us a little enquire how thoſe whom the fore-mention'd Motives bring to Church, behave themſelves there; and that is indeed with great Conformity to the ends of their coming, their errand is not to be Suppliants, neither do they put themſelves in the poſture: kneeling is impertinent for them who mean not to pray, but as the Apoſtle deſcribes the Idolatrous ſervice of the *Iſraelites*, *They ſate down to eat and drink and roſe up to play*, ſo theſe ſit down to talk and laugh with their Pew-fellows, and riſe up to gape and look about them. When they ſhould be confeſſing their Sins to Almighty God, they are apologizing (perhaps) to one another for the omiſſion of a ceremonious Viſit, or ſome other breach of civility; when they ſhould be *obſerving the goings of God in the Sanctuary*, Pſalm 68. they are inquiring when this Lady came to Town, or when that goes out; nay, perhaps the Theater is brought into the Temple, the laſt Play they ſaw is recollected, and Quotati-

ons

ons enough brought thence to vie with the Preacher. 'Tis impoſſible to reckon up all their Topics of diſcourſe, nay it were ſcandalous for one that reproves them to pretend to know, by how many Impertinencies (to ſay no worſe) they profane that Holy Place and Time.

49. But that All-ſeeing Eye in whoſe preſence they are, keeps an exact account, and will charge them not only with the principle but the product; not only with their own Irreverences, but with thoſe which by their example or incouragement they have occaſion'd in others; nay farther, even with that ſcandal that redounds to Chriſtianity by it. For when one that is to chuſe a Religion, ſhall read the Precepts of *Pythagoras*, enjoining, that the Gods muſt not be worſhipt in paſſing by, as it were accidentally, but with the greateſt ſolemnity and intention; when they ſhall conſider the care of *Numa* in inſtituting Officers, who at Sacrifices, and all Divine Services, ſhould call upon the People to keep ſilence and advert to Devotion; or but the practice of the preſent *Mahometans*, who permit none to ſit in their *Moſches*, nor to pray without proſtration. When I ſay this is conſidered, and compar'd with the ſcandalous indecency obſervable in our Churches, he will certainly exclude Chriſtianity from all competition in his choice; nor allow that the name of a Religion

ligion, whose very Worship appears so profane, and whose Votaries mock the God they pretend to serve.

50. YET how severe soever the charge may lie against some, I am far from including all under it. I know there are many Ladies whose examples are reproches to the other Sex, that help to fill our Congregations when Gentlemen desert them, and to whom somtimes we alone owe that our Churches are not furnished like the Feast in the Parable, *Luke* 14. 21. merely out of *high waies and hedges, with the poor and the maimed, the halt and the blind*; yet some even of these may be liable to some irregularity, which may be the effect of inadvertence or misperswasion, tho not of contemt or profaneness.

51. AND first, 'tis observable in some who come constantly, that yet they come not early, so that a considerable part of Praiers is past ere they enter the Church. This first causes some disturbance to others, the successive entry of new comers keeping the Congregation in a continual motion and agitation, which how unagreeable it is to Devotion, *Numa* a Heathen Prince may teach us, who, as *Plutarch* tells us, took a particular care, that in the time of Divine Worship, no knocking, clapping, or other noise should be heard; as well knowing how much the operations of the Intellect are obstructed by any thing that importunes the Senses.

Senſes. What would we have ſaid, ſhould he have come into one of our City Congregations, where often during the whole time of Praier, the clapping of Pew-doors do's outnoiſe the Reader?

52. But beſides the indecency of the thing, and the interruption it gives to others, 'tis very injurious to themſelves; a kind of partial excommunication of their own inflicting, which excludes them from a part of the Divine Offices, and from that part too which is of the moſt univerſal Concern, I mean the Confeſſion of Sins, which the wiſdom of our Church has fitly placed in the beginning of her Service, as the neceſſary Introduction to all the reſt. For conſidering how obnoxious we are all to the wrath and vengeance of God, our firſt buſineſs is to deprecate that by an humble confeſſion of our guilt. Would any Malefactor that had forfeited his Life to Juſtice, come boldly to his Prince, and without taking notice of his Crimes, importune him to beſtow the greateſt Favors and Dignities upon him? Yet 'tis the very ſame abrupt impudence in us, to ſupplicate the Divine Majeſty, before we attemt to attone him; to ask good things from him, before we have acknowledg'd the ill we have don againſt him. And to ſuch God may juſtly make ſuch a return as *Auguſtus* did to one that had entertained him much below his Greatneſs, I knew

not before that we were such familiars.

53. IT will much better become them to anticipate the time, *to wait at the posts of his doors*, Prov. 8. 31. and contrive to be there before the Service begins, that so by previous recollection they may put their minds in a fit posture of address at the public Audience: which (by the way) speaks it to be no very laudable custom which almost universally prevails, that those few who do come early, spend the interval before Service in talking with one another, by which they do not only lose the advantage of that time for preparation; but convert it into the direct contrary, do thereby actually unfit and indispose themselves. God knows our hearts, even in their most composed temper, are too apt to create diversions; we need not start Game for them to chase, and by prefacing our Praier with secular discourse, make a gap for the same thoughts to return upon us in them. Besides, in relation to the place, it has a spice of Profaneness, 'tis the bringing the *Moabite* and the *Ammonite* into the Temple, *Deut.* 23. 3. a kind of Invasion on Gods propriety, by introducing our worldly concerns as divertisements into the House which is called by His Name, solemnly dedicated to him, and therefore dedicated that it might be His peculiar. So that with a little variation, we may to such apply the expostulatory reproof of the Apostle to the *Corinthians*,

rinthians, 1 Cor. 11. 12. *what, have ye not houſes to talk and converſe in, or deſpiſe ye the Church of God?* But this is, I confeſs, a reproof that will not reach to many, there being ſo few of the better ſort that come early enough to talk before Service, and as for thoſe who talk at it, we have already rankt them under another *Claſſis*. Yet give me leave to add, that thoſe fall not much ſhort of that degree of profaneneſs, who come late only becauſe they are loth to riſe, or to abate any thing of the curioſity of their Dreſs. For ſhe that prefers her ſloth or her vanity before Gods Service, is like (how decently ſoever ſhe behave her ſelf) to give but an unſignificant attendance at it.

54. But I gueſs this may in many proceed from another cauſe, which tho leſs in their intention, is not ſo in reſpect either of its unreaſonableneſs, or its effects, and that is an unequal eſtimate they make of the parts of Gods Service. This laſt Age has brought in ſuch a partiality for Preaching, that Praier ſeems comparatively (like *Sarah* to *Hagar*) deſpicable in their Eyes: ſo that if they can but come time enough to the Sermon, they think they have diſcharged their weightier part of the Law, and of their own duty. This miſperſwaſion, tho it have too generally diffuſed it ſelf thro both Sexes, yet ſeems to have bin very eſpecially imbibed by the Female. And beſides

beſides the evidence that Sunday gives, the week-daies afford no leſs. Let there be a Lecture, tho at the remoteſt part of the Town, what hurrying is there to it: But let the Bell tole never ſo loud for the Canonical hours of Common Praier, 'twill not call the neareſt of the Neighborhood. I ſpeak not of thoſe who are at defiance with our Service, and have liſted themſelves in ſeperate Congregations (for I intend not to trace them thro their wild mazes) but of thoſe who yet own our Church, and object not to its Offices, but only have ſuffered their valu for them to be inſenſibly undermined by their greater zeal for Preaching. God ſure intends an Harmony in all Sacred Ordinances, and would not have them ſet up a party againſt each other, but mutually aſſiſt each others operation upon us. Thus Praier diſpoſes us to receive benefit by Preaching, and Preaching teaches us how to pray aright; and God grant we may long enjoy the public opportunities of both. Yet ſince this Age has brought them to a competition, I muſt take leave to ſay, that if we come impartially to weigh Praier and Preaching, the balance will incline another way then it ſeems with many to do, and we ſhall find Praier the more eſſential part of Religion.

55. THE end of Preaching is twofold, either to teach us what we know not, or to excite us to practice what we already know: now

now in relation to the firſt of theſe ends, I ſuppoſe there is a wide difference between Preaching at the firſt promulgation of the Goſpel, and now. 'Twas then the only way of reveling to the World the whole myſtery of our Salvation; ſo that the Apoſtles inference was then irrefragable, *How ſhall they believe on him of whom they have not heard, and how ſhall they hear without a Preacher?* Rom. 10. 14. But where Chriſtianity is planted, and the New Teſtament received, we have therein the whole Doctrine of Chriſt; nay we have not only the matter, but the very form of thoſe Sermons which Chriſt and his Apoſtles Preached; ſo that unleſs we think them not ſufficiently gifted, we cannot but acknowledg we have in them ample inſtruction both for Faith and Manners; enough, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *to make us wiſe unto Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. And the reading of thoſe being a conſiderable part of our Churches Service, we have the moſt genuine Preaching even before the Miniſter aſcends the Pulpit. Beſides for the help of thoſe whoſe youth or incapacity diſables them from making collections thence for themſelves, our Church has epitomiz'd the moſt neceſſary points of Belief and Practice in the Catechiſm; not (as the Roman) to preclude their farther ſearch, but to ſupply them in the interim till they are qualified for it; and by that early in-

infusion of Christian Principles, to secure them of that knowledg which is simply necessary to their Salvation.

56. Now sure, to people in this state, Preaching is not of so absolute necessity in respect of instruction, as it was for those who from Heathenism and Idolatry were to be brought first to the Knowledg, and then to the Faith of Christ. We seem therefore now more generally concern'd in the other end of Preaching, the exciting us to practice; for alas, there are few of us who stumble on sin for want of light, but either thro heedlesness, and want of looking before us, or else by a wilful prostration of our selves to it; so that we often need to be roused out of our negligence, to be frighted out of our stubbornness, and by a close application of those Truths we either forget, or suppress, be animated to our Duty. And for this purpose Preaching is doubtless of excellent use, and the nauseating of it shews a very sick constitution of mind; yet sure the over-greedy desire may be a Disease also. He that eats more then he can concoct, does not so much assist as oppress nature; and those that run from Sermon to Sermon, that allow themselves no time to chew, much less to digest what they hear, will sooner confound their brains then better their lives. Nay, it oft betraies them to a very pernicious delusion, it diverts them from many of the practical parts of

of Piety, and yet gives them a confidence that they are extraordinarily Pious; and by their belief that Religion consists principally in hearing, makes them forget to try themselves by that more infallible test of doing Gods will. So that whereas God never design'd Preaching for more then a guide in their way, they make it their way, and their end too; and Hearing must, like a circle, begin and terminate in it self.

57. I am sure in secular concerns, we should think him a very unprofitable servant, that after his Lord had given him directions what to do, should be so transported with hearing his instructions, that he should desire to have it infinitly repeated, and so spend the time wherein he should do the work. And we have reason to think God will make the same judgment of those who do the like in his service.

58. One would now think that this ravenous appetite of hearing should supersede all niceness in it: yet we find it does not, but that some make a shift to be at once voracious and squeamish. If this Spiritual Food be not artificially drest, 'tis too gross for their palats: the Phrase must be elegant, the words well accented, and the *inticing words of mans wisdom*, which St. *Paul* disclaims in his Preaching, 1 *Cor.* 2. 4. is that which they principally regard. Nay, the memory of the

Preacher becomes the moſt material Point of his Sermon, and the firſt glance on his Book prejudges him. I need not add the extravagances of an uncouth tone, a furious vehemence, or phantaſtic geſture, wherein the ſoul and vital efficacy of Preaching has bin ſolemnly placed. Now 'tis evident, all theſe are but trivial Accompliſhments; ſo that thoſe who inſiſt ſo much on them, do make Preaching much leſs Sacred and Divine then indeed it is; and therefore cannot without abſurdity lay the main ſtreſs of Religion upon it, or make that the higheſt of Gods Ordinancies, which owes all its gratefulneſs with th m to the Endowments of men. Some may think I purſue this ſubject too far, but I am ſure I do it not with deſign to derogate from the juſt reſpect due to Preaching; only I would not have it monopolize our eſteem, or juſtle out another Duty, which is of more conſtant uſe, and indiſpenſible neceſſity.

59. AND ſuch certainly is Praier, that reſpiration of the Soul, which is ſo neceſſary, that it admits not of long intermiſſion, and therefore ſeems to carry the ſame proportion to hearing, which breathing do's to eating: we may make long intervals of feeding, and yet ſubſiſt; but if we ſhould do ſo in breathing, we cannot recover it. Praier is like the Morning and Evening Sacrifice under the Law,

Law, which God ordained ſhould be perpetual; whereas Preaching is but like the Readings in the Synagogues on the Sabbaths and Feſtivals. Indeed, however we have confounded the terms, 'tis Praier only that can properly be called the Worſhip of God; 'tis that by which we pay him his ſolemn homage, acknowledging his Soveraignty, and our own dependance. When we hear, we do no more then what every Diſciple does to his Maſter; but when we pray, we own him as the ſpring and ſource of all the good we expect, as the Author of our Being, and the Object of our Adoration: in a word, we do by it profeſs him our God; it being an impreſs of meer natural Religion to ſupplicate the Deity we acknowledg.

60. And as by Praier we tender the greateſt Honor to God, ſo likewiſe do we procure the greateſt advantages to our ſelves. Praier is the powerful Engin, by which we draw down Bleſſings; 'tis the Key which lets us into the immenſe Store-houſe of the Almighty; nay 'tis that upon which the efficacy of preaching depends. The word is but a dead letter without the Spirit; and God has promiſed the Spirit to none but thoſe that ask it, *Luke* 11. 13. So that Praier is that which enlivens and inſpirits our moſt Sacred Actions: and accordingly in Scripture we find it ſtill a concomitant in all Eccleſiaſtical concerns. When

an Apoſtle was to be ſubſtituted in the room of *Judas*, we find they referred it not to the deciſion of lots, till God, who had the ſole diſpoſing of them, *Prov.* 16 33. had bin invoked by ſolemn Praier, *Acts* 1. 24. So when *Barnabas* and *Saul* were to be ſeparated to the Miniſtry, tho the appointment were by the Holy Ghoſt, yet that ſuperſeded not the neceſſity of Praier; the Apoſtles praied, (yea, and faſted too) before they laid hands on them, *Acts* 13. 3. Nay, our Bleſſed Savior himſelf, tho He knew what was in Man, and needed no guidance but his own Omniſcience in his choice: yet we find that before his Election of the twelve Apoſtles, he continued a whole night in Praier to God, *Luke* 16. 12. doubtleſs, to teach us how requiſit Praier is in all our important intereſts, which like the Pillar of Cloud, and Fire to the *Iſraelites*, is our beſt Convoy thro the Wilderneſs, thro all the ſnares and temtations, thro all the calamities and diſtreſſes of this World, and our moſt infallible guide to the Land of Promiſe.

61. AND ſure when all theſe are the properties of Praier, tho privat, they will not leſs belong to the public. Such a conſpiration and union of importunate Devotion muſt have a proportionable increaſe in its effect: and if Heaven can ſuffer violence by the fervor of one ſingle Votary, with what ſtorms, what bat-

batteries will it be ſcaled by a numerous Congregation? We find the Church is, by Chriſt, compared to an *Army with banners*, Cant. 9 3. but ſure never is this Army in ſo good array, in ſo invincibly a poſture, as upon its knees. The Eccleſiaſtical ſtory tells us of a Legion of Chriſtians in *Aurelius*'s Camp, who in that poſture diſcomfited two aſſailants at once, the enemy and the drought; that breath which they ſent up in Praiers, like a kindly exhalation return'd in rain, and relieved the periſhing Army: and had we but the ſame fervor, and the ſame innocency, could we lift up but as pure hands as they did, there would be no Bleſſing beyond our reach. But the leſs any of us find our ſelves ſo qualified, the more need we have to put our ſelves among thoſe that are.

62. There is an unhappy contagion in goodneſs, like green wood; we may be kindled by the neighboring Flame; the example of anothers Zeal may awake mine. However, there is ſome advantage in being in the company: thoſe Showers of Benediction which their Praiers bring down, are ſo plentiful, that ſome drops at leaſt may ſcatter upon thoſe about them. We find *Eliſha*, for *Jehoſhaphat*'s ſake, endured the preſence of *Jehoram*, whom otherwiſe he profeſſes he would not have lookt towards, 2 *Kings* 3. 14. and God may perhaps do the like in this caſe;

and

and as he prospered *Potiphar* for *Joseph*'s sake, *Gen.* 39. 23. so the Piety of some few may redound to the benefit of all. From all these Considerations I suppose may sufficiently be evinced the necessity and benefit of public Praier, and consequently the unreasonableness of those, who upon any pretence neglect it. I shall now only beseech those to whom I speak, to make the Application to themselves, and to shew they do so by their more early and more assiduous attendance on it.

63. THERE is also another Duty to which many of those to whom I write seem to need incitation, and that is Communicating, a part of Devotion which the looser sort scarce ever think in season till their Death-bed: as if that Sacrament, like the Romanists extreme Unction, were only fit for expiring Souls. But to such we may apply the words of the Angel to the Woman, *Luke* 24. 5. *Why seek ye the living among the dead?* Why think ye that the Son of Righteousness is only to shine in the shades of Death, or that Christ is never to give us his Flesh, till we are putting off our own? 'Tis one principal end of that Sacrament to engage and enable us to a new life. How preposterous then is it, how utterly inconsistent with that end to defer it to the hour of Death? 'Tis true, 'tis a good *Viaticum* for such as are in their way towards bliss,

bliſs: but it is too bold a hope, to fancy that it ſhall in an inſtant bring them into that way, who have their whole Life poſted on in the contrary. The roads to Heaven and Hell lie ſure too far a ſunder to be within diſtance of one ſtep; nor can it with any ſafety be preſumed, that once receiving at their Death, ſhall expiate ſo many wilful neglects of it in their life.

64. But I ſhall ſuppoſe theſe total Omiſſions are not a common guilt: yet with many others the fault differs only in degree: they do not wholly omit, but yet come ſo infrequently, as if they thought it a very arbitrary matter whether they come or no. And this truly is obſervable in many who ſeem to give good attendance on other parts of Divine Worſhip. For indeed, 'tis a ſad ſpectacle to ſee, that let a Church be never ſo much crouded at Sermon, 'tis emtied in an inſtant when the Communion begins: people run as it were frighted from it, as if they thought with thoſe in *Malachy*, that *the Table of the Lord is polluted*, Mal. 1. 12. that ſome Peſt or Infection would thence break forth upon them. A ſtrange indignity to the Majeſty, and ingratitude to the love of our Redeemer. Let a King, or but ſome great Man make a public Entertainment, how hard is it to keep back the preſſing multitude: many Officers are neceſſary to repel uninvited Gueſts:

and

and yet here there needs more to drive us to it, tho the invitation be more general, and the Treat infinitly more magnificent.

65. I know this fault (like many other) ſhrouds it ſelf under a fair diſguiſe to the humbleſt Veneration. People ſay, 'tis their great reverence they have for the Sacrament that keeps them at ſo great a diſtance: but ſure that is but a fictitious reverence which diſcards obedience; and when Chriſt commands our coming, our drawing back looks more like ſtubbornneſs and rebellion, then awe and reſpect. I ſuppoſe we pretend not to exceed the Primitive Chriſtians in humility and godly fear, and yet they communicated daily: and therefore ſure our reverence is of a much differing make from theirs, if it produce ſuch contrary effects. Indeed 'tis to be feared, that many put a great cheat upon themſelves in this matter. The Euchariſt is juſtly accounted the higheſt of Divine Ordinances; and thoſe who think of no preparation in other, yet have ſome general impreſſions of the neceſſity of it in this; but the uneaſineſs of the task diſcourages them, they dare not come without a Wedding Garment, and yet are loth to be at the pains to put it on: ſo that all this goodly pretext of reverence, is but the Devil in *Samuels* Mantle, is but ſloth clad in the habit of humility.

66. AND

96. And to this temtation of ſloth, there is another thing ſubſervient, and that is the eaſie and ſlight opinion which is commonly taken of ſins of Omiſſion. Many are ſtartled at great Commiſſions, think them to carry a face of deformity and horror, who in the mean time look on omiſſions only as privations and meer nothings, as if all the affirmative Precepts were only things of form, put in by God rather to try our inclinations, then to oblige our performance; and ſo were rather overtures and propoſals which we may aſſent to or not, then injunctions which at our peril we muſt obey. A fancy no leſs abſurd then impious. That God ſhould be content ſo to compound with his Creatures (and like a Prince over-power'd by his Vaſſals) conſent to remit all their Homage, abſolve them from all poſitive Duty, ſo they would be but ſo civil as not to flie in his face, or to commit outrage on his Perſon. But this wild imagination needs no other confutation, then that form of Inditement our Savior gives us, as the Model of that which ſhall be uſed at the laſt Day, *Matth.* 25. where the whole Proceſs lies againſt ſins of omiſſion, and yet the ſentence is as diſmal and irreverſible, as if all the Commiſſions in the World had bin put into the Bill.

97. And certainly of all Omiſſions none is like to be more ſeverely charged then this

of Communicating, which is not only a diſobedience, but an unkindneſs, which ſtrikes not only at the Autority, but the Love of our Lord, when he ſo affects a union with us, that he creates Myſteries only to effect it, when de deſcends even to our ſenſuality, and becauſe we want ſpiritual appetites, puts himſelf within reach of our natural; and as he once veil'd his Divinity in fleſh, ſo now he veils even that fleſh under the form of our corporal nuriſhment, only that he may the more indiſſolvably unite, yea incorporate himſelf with us. When I ſay he do's all this, we are not only impious but inhuman if it will not attract us. Nay farther, when he does all this upon the moſt endearing memory of what he has before don for us, when he preſents himſelf to our embraces in the ſame form wherein he preſented himſelf to God for our expiation, when he ſhews us thoſe Wounds which our iniquities made, thoſe Stripes by which we were healed, that Death by which we are revived, ſhall we to complete the Scene of his Paſſion, force him alſo to that pathetic complaint, *Lam.* 1. 12. *Have ye no regard, all ye that paſs by?* Shall we inſtead of ſmiting our breaſts (as did other Witneſſes of his ſufferings) turn our backs? If we can habitually do this, 'tis to be feared the next degree will be to wag our heads too, and we ſhall have the profaneneſs to deride, what

what we have not the Piety to commemorate.

68. AND this ſeems to be no improbable fear: for in Religion there are gradual declinations as well as advances; coldneſs and tepidity will (if not ſtopt in its progreſs) quickly grow to lothing and contemt. And indeed to what can we more reaſonably impute the great overflowings of profaneneſs among us, then to our ill husbanding the means of Grace? Now certainly of all thoſe means there is none of greater energy and power then the bleſſed Sacrament.

69. WERE there no other benefit derived from it, ſave that which the preparation implies, 'twere very conſiderable. It brings us to a recollection, fixes our indefinite purpoſes of ſearching and trying our waies, which elſe perhaps we ſhould infinitly defer; ſtops our carriere in ſin, and by acquainting us with our ſelves, ſhews us where our danger lies, and how we are to avert it, what breaches are made in upon our ſouls, and how we muſt repair them, all which are with many ſeldom thought of, but when the time of communicating approches. We live ſo far off from our ſelves, know ſo little what is don in us, that we anſwer the deſcription the Prophet makes of the ſurprize of *Babylon*, of which the King knew nothing till Poſt after Poſt run to inform him, that his *City was taken at one end*, Jer. 51. 14. We often lie ſecure while the e-

nemy is within our walls, and therefore they are friendly alarms which the Sacrament gives us to look to our defence. But if when the Trumpet ſounds, none will prepare himſelf to the Battel, if when the Miniſter gives warning of a Sacrament, and the preparation it requires, we go our waies, and with *Gallio*, *care for none of thoſe things*; or with *Felix*, Acts 24. 26. *put it off to a convenient time*, we wilfully expoſe our ſelves, and 'tis but juſt Chriſts dreadful menace ſhould be executed upon us, that we *die in our ſins*, who will fruſtrate ſuch an opportunity of a reſcue from them.

70. BUT 'tis not only this remoter and accidental advantage (this preventing Grace) which the Holy Euchariſt affords; it contains yet greater and more intrinſic benefits, is a Spring of aſſiſting Grace alſo: 'tis a Magazine of Spiritual Artillery to fortify us againſt all aſſaults of the Devil, the great Catholicon for all the Maladies of our Souls, that which if duly received, will qualify us to make St. *Pauls* boaſt, *Phil.* 4 13. *I can do all things thro Chriſt which ſtrengthens me.* In a word, 'tis to us whatever we need, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemtion, becauſe it poſſeſſes us of him who is ſo, 1 *Cor.* 1. 31. ſo that when ever we neglect it, we manifeſtly betray our own intereſt, and do implicitly chuſe death, whilſt we thus run from life.

71. THUS

71. Thus we ſee there is a concurrence of all ſorts of Arguments for this Duty, oh that ſome (at leaſt) of them may prevail! If we are not tractable enough to do it in obedience, yet let us be ſo ingenuous as to do it for Love, for Gratitude; or if for neither of thoſe, let us be at leaſt ſo wiſe as to do it for intereſt and advantage. I know people are apt to pretend buſineſs, the Farm and the Oxen muſt excuſe their coming to the Feaſt; but alas what buſineſs can there be of equal neceſſity or advantage with this? Yet even that Apology is ſuperſeded to thoſe I now ſpeak to, who as I obſerved before, have leſure more then enough, ſo that it would be one part of the benefit, its taking up ſome of their time: let me therefore earneſtly beſeech them not to grudg a few of their vacant hours to this ſo happy an emploiment.

72. Did any of their near Friends and Relations invite them to an interview, they would not think him too importune, tho he repeted the ſummons weekly, nay daily, but would punctually obſerve the meeting: And when their Savior ſeldomer entreats their company, ſhall he not obtain it? muſt he never ſee them but at two or three ſolemn times of the year? and ſhall they wonder at any intervening invitation (as the *Shunamites* Husband did at her going to the Prophet, when it was *neither new Moon nor Sabbath*,

2 Kings

2 Kings 4. 23.) and tell him 'tis not yet *Eaſter* or *Chriſtmas*: this were not only to be irreligious but rude; and methinks thoſe who ſtand ſo much upon the punctilios of Civility to one another, ſhould not then only lay aſide their good manners when they are to treat with their Redeemer. Certainly he is not ſo unpleaſant company that they need ſhun his converſe: if he do appear ſo to any, tis that ſhunning that is the cauſe of it. He do's not open his treaſures to ſtrangers: they that come now and then for form ſake, no wonder if their entertainment be as cold as their addreſs. They that would indeed *taſt how ſweet the Lord is*, *Pſa.* 34. 8. muſt by the frequency of their coming ſhew the heartineſs of it, and then they would indeed finde it a *feaſt of fat things*, as the Prophet ſpeaks.

73. In a word, let them but make experiment, reſolve for a certain time (be it a year or thereabouts) to omit no opportunity, (and with all no due preparation) of communicating, I am a little confident they will afterwards need no other importunity but that of their own longings: the expiration of that definit time will prove the beginning of an indefinit, and their reſolutions will have no other limit but their lives. For certainly there is not in all the whole myſtery of Godlineſs, in all the Oeconomy of

of the Goſpel, ſo expedite, ſo infallible a means of Growth in grace, as a frequent and worthy participation of this bleſſed Sacrament. I cannot therefore more pertinently cloſe this Section, then with this exhortation to it, by which they will not only compleate all their Devotions, crown and hallow the reſt of their Oblations to God, but they will be advanced alſo in all parts of practical piety. For tho this and other ſacred Offices be perform'd in the Church, the efficacy of them is not circumſcribed within thoſe walls, but follows the devout ſoul thro all the occurrences of human life.

74. She that has intently conſider'd the preſence of God in the Sanctuary, has learn'd ſo much of his ubiquity, that ſhe will not eaſily forget it in other places, and ſhe that remembers that, will need no other gaurd to ſecure her innocence, no other incentive to animate her endeavors, ſince ſhe is view'd by him who is equally powerful to puniſh or reward, who regards not the perſons of the mighty, nor can be awed into the connivance of a crime. Indeed a ſerious advertence to the divine Preſence, is the moſt certain curb to all diſorderly appetites, as on the contrary the not having God before their eies, is in Scripture the comprehenſive deſcription of the moſt wretchleſs profligated ſtate of ſin. It concerns therefore all

all thoſe who aſpire to true Piety, to nuriſh that awful ſenſe of their hearts, as that which will beſt enable them to practice the Apoſtles advice, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *To cleanſe themſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, and to perfect holineſs in the fear of God.*

75. I am ſenſible that this Section is ſpun out to a length very unproportionable to the former; but as the principal wheel in an artificial movement may be allowed a bulk ſomwhat anſwerable to its uſe, ſo upon the ſame account, the ſize of this is not unjuſtifiable, the Piety which this deſigns to recommend, being the one neceſſary thing, which muſt influence all other endowments. We know the courſe reſemblance *Solomon* makes of a *fair woman without diſcretion, that ſhe is like a jewel of gold in a ſwines ſnout,* Pro. 11. 12. but even that diſcretion (if any ſuch could be) without Piety were but the adding one jewel more, expoſing another valuable thing to the ſame deſpicable ridiculous uſe. But to ſpeak truly there is no real diſcretion, where there is no Religion: and therefore *Solomon* ſeems in this place to underſtand by it that practical Wiſdome, which in the ſacred Dialect (his Writings eſpecially) is equivalent to the fear of the Lord. 'Tis true there may be a rallying wit to ſcoff and abuſe, a ſerpentine Wilineſs to undermine and deceive, but that ſort of Wiſdom (like that of *Achitophell*

to hell) finally converts into fooliſhneſs, does very often appear to do ſo in this life, but muſt certainly in the next, becauſe it builds upon a falſe bottom, prefers Temporal things before Eternal. And as neither Beauty nor Wit, (the two celebrated accompliſhments of Women) ſo will neither Greatneſs nor Honor give any advantage without Piety, 'twill only (as hath bin already obſerved) make them more exemplary ſinners, inflame the account, and ſo expoſe them to a greater degree of condemnation: for ſure 'tis not their Sex that will reſcue them from the diſmal denunciation of the wiſe Man, *Wiſd. 6. 6. Mighty men ſhall be mightily tormented.* I conclude all with another irrefragable maxim of the ſame Author. *Whether one be rich, noble, or poor, their glory is the fear of the Lord.*

THE LADIES CALLING.

PART. II. SECT. I.

Of Virgins.

1. WE have taken a view of thoſe general Qualifications, which are at once the Duty and the Ornament of the Female Sex conſider'd at large: Theſe, like the common Genus, involve all. But there are alſo ſpecific Differences ariſing from the ſeveral Circumſtances and ſtates of Life, ſome whereof may exact greater degrees even of the former Vertues, and all may have ſome diſtinct and peculiar

culiar Requiſits adapted to that peculiar ſtate and condition: and of theſe our propoſed method engages us now to conſider. Human Life is full of viciſſitudes and changes, ſo that 'tis impoſſible to enumerate all the leſſer accidental alterations to which it is liable. But the principal and moſt diſtinct Scenes, in which a Woman can be ſuppos'd regularly to be an Actor, are theſe three, *Virginity*, *Marriage*, and *Widdowhood*: which as they differ widely from each other, ſo for the diſcharging their reſpective Duties, there are peculiar cautions worthy to be adverted to.

2. VIRGINITY is firſt, in order of time, and if we will take St. *Paul*'s judgment, in reſpect of excellence alſo, 1 *Cor.* 7. And indeed, ſhe that preſerves her ſelf in that ſtate upon the account he mentions, *ver.* 33. that *ſhe may care for the things that are of the Lord, that ſhe may be holy both in body and in ſpirit*, deſerves a great deal of Veneration, as making one of the neareſt approches to the Angelical State. And accordingly, in the Primitive Times, ſuch a Virginity was had in a ſingular Eſtimation, and by the aſſignment of the Schole-men hath a particular Coronet of Glory belonging to it. Nay, even among the Heathens, a Conſecrated Virgin was look'd on as a thing moſt Sacred. The Roman Veſtals had extraordinary Privileges allowed

allowed them by the State: and they were generally held in ſuch Reverence, that Teſtaments, and other Depoſitums of the greateſt Truſt, were uſually committed to their Cuſtody, as to the ſureſt and moſt inviolable Sanctuary. Nay, their preſence was ſo to convicted Malefactors; the Magiſtrates veiling their *faſces* when they appear'd, and giving up the Criminal to the commanding Interceſſion of Virgin Innocence.

3. As for the Religious Orders of Virgins, in the preſent Roman Church, tho ſome, and thoſe very great abuſes have crept in; yet I think 'twere to be wiſhed, that thoſe who ſuppreſt them in this Nation, had confin'd themſelves within the bounds of a Reformation, by chuſing rather to rectifie and regulate, then aboliſh them.

4. But tho there be not among us ſuch Societies, yet there may be *Nuns* who are not Profeſt. She who has devoted her heart to God, and the better to ſecure his Intereſt againſt the moſt inſinuating Rival of Human Love, intends to admit none, and praies that ſhe may not, do's by thoſe humble purpoſes conſecrate her ſelf to God: and perhaps more acceptably, then if her preſumtion ſhould make her more poſitive, and engage her in a Vow ſhe is not ſure to perform.

5. But this is a caſe does not much need ſtating in our Clime, wherein Women are ſo

ſo little tranſported with this zeal of voluntary Virginity, that there are but few can find patience for it when neceſſary. An old Maid is now thought ſuch a Curſe, as no Poetic fury can exceed, look'd on as the moſt calamitous Creature in Nature. And I ſo far yield to the opinion, as to confeſs it to thoſe who are kept in that ſtate againſt their wills; but ſure the original of that Miſery is from the deſire, not the reſtraint of Marriage: let them but ſuppreſs that once, and the other will never be their infelicity. But I muſt not be ſo unkind to the Sex, as to think 'tis alwaies ſuch deſire that gives them averſion to Celibacy; I doubt not, many are frighted only with the vulgar contemt under which that ſtate lies: for which if there be no cure, yet there is the ſame armor againſt this, which is againſt all other cauſleſs Reproches, *viz.* to contemn it. Yet I am a little apt to believe there may be a prevention in the caſe. If the ſuperannuated Virgins would behave themſelves with Gravity and Reſervedneſs, addict themſelves to the ſtricteſt Virtue and Piety, they would give the World ſome cauſe to believe 'twas not their neceſſity, but their choice which kept them unmarried; that they were pre-engag'd to a better Amour, eſpouſed to the Spiritual Bride-groom: and this would give them among the ſober ſort, at leaſt the reverence and eſteem of Matrons.

Or

Or if after all caution and endeavour, they chance to fall under the Tongues of malicious Slanderers; this is no more then happens in all other Inſtances of Duty: and if contemt be to be avoided, Chriſtianity it ſelf muſt be quitted as well as Virgin Chaſtity. But if on the other ſide, they endeavour to diſguiſe their Age by all the Impoſtures and Gaieties of a youthful dreſs and behavior, if they ſtill herd themſelves among the youngeſt and vaineſt company, betray a young Mind in an aged Body; this muſt certainly expoſe them to ſcorn and cenſure. If no Play, no Ball or Dancing-meeting can eſcape them, people will undoubtedly conclude that they deſire to put off themſelves, to meet with Chapmen, who ſo conſtantly keep the Fairs. I wiſh therefore they would more univerſally try the former Expedients, which I am confident is the beſt Amulet againſt the reproch they ſo much dread, and may alſo deliver them from the danger of a more coſtly remedy; I mean that of an unequal and imprudent Match, which many have ruſh'd upon as they have ran frighted from the other, and ſo by an unhappy contradiction, do both ſtay long and marry haſtily, gall their necks to ſpare their ears, and run into the yoke rather then hear ſo ſlight and unreaſonable a reproch. They need not, I think, be upbraided with the folly of ſuch an Election, ſince their own Ex-

Experience is (to many of them) but too ſevere a Monitor. I ſhall not inſiſt farther on this, but having given the elder Virgins that Enſign of their Seniority, as to ſtand firſt in my Diſcourſe, I ſhall now addreſs more generally to the reſt.

6. AND here the two grand Elements eſſential to the Virgin ſtate, are Modeſty and Obedience, which tho neceſſary to all, yet are in a more eminent degree requir'd here. And therefore, tho I have ſpoken largely of the vertue of Modeſty in the firſt part of this Tract, yet it will not be impertinent to make ſome farther reflections on it, by way of application to Virgins, in whom Modeſty ſhould appear in its higheſt Elevation, and ſhould come up to ſhamefacedneſs. Her look, her ſpeech, her whole behaviour, ſhould own an humble diſtruſt of her ſelf; ſhe is to look on her ſelf but as a Novice, a Probationer in the World, and muſt take this time rather to learn and obſerve, then to dictate and preſcribe. Indeed there is ſcarce any thing looks more indecent, then to ſee a young Maid too forward and confident in her talk. 'Tis the Opinion of the Wiſe-men, *Eccl.* 32. 8. that *a young man ſhould ſcarce ſpeak, tho twice ask'd*: in proportion to which, 'twill ſure not become a young Woman, whoſe Sex puts her under greater reſtraints, to be either importunate or magiſterial in her Diſcourſe. And tho that which for-

former Ages call boldneſs, is now only Aſſurance and good Breeding, yet we have ſeen ſuch bad ſuperſtructures upon that Foundation, as ſure will not much recommend it to any conſidering perſon.

7. But there is another breach of Modeſty, as it relates to Chaſtity, in which they are yet more eſpecially concern'd. The very name of Virgin imports a moſt critical niceneſs in that point. Every indecent curioſity, or impure fancy, is a deflowring of the mind, and every the leaſt corruption of them gives ſome degrees of defilement to the Body too. For between the ſtate of pure immaculate Virginity, and arrant Proſtitution, there are many intermedial ſteps; and ſhe that makes any of them, is ſo far departed from her firſt Integrity. She that liſtens to any wanton Diſcourſe has violated her ears; ſhe that ſpeaks any, her tongue; every immodeſt glance vitiates her eye, and every the lighteſt act of dalliance leaves ſomthing of ſtain and ſulliage behind it. There is therefore a moſt rigorous caution requiſite herein: for as nothing is more clean and white then a perfect Virginity, ſo every the leaſt ſpot or ſoil is the more diſcernable. Beſides, Youth is for the moſt part flexible, and eaſily warps into a crookedneſs, and therefore can never ſet it ſelf too far from a temtation. Our tender bloſſoms we are fain to skreen and ſhelter, becauſe every unkindly

kindly air nips and deſtroies them: & nothing can be more nice and delicate then a Maiden Vertue, which ought not to be expoſ'd to any of thoſe malignant airs which may blaſt and corrupt it, of which God knows there are too many, ſome that blow from within, and others from without.

8. OF the firſt ſort, there is none more miſchievous then Curioſity, a temtation which foil'd human Nature even in Paradiſe: and therefore ſure a feeble Girl ought not to truſt her ſelf with that which ſubdued her better fortified Parent. The truth is, an affected Ignorance cannot be ſo blameable in other caſes, as it is commendable in this. Indeed, it is the ſureſt and moſt invincible Guard; for ſhe who is curious to know indecent things, 'tis odds but ſhe will too ſoon and too dearly buy the learning. The ſuppreſſing and deteſting all ſuch Curioſities, is therefore that eminent fundamental piece of Continence I would recommend to them, as that which will protect and ſecure all the reſt.

9. BUT when they have ſet this guard upon themſelves, they muſt provide againſt Foreign aſſaults too; the moſt dangerous whereof I take to be ill Company, and Idleneſs. Againſt the firſt they muſt provide by a prudent choice of Converſation, which ſhould generally be of their own Sex; yet not all of that neither, but ſuch who will at leaſt enter-

entertain them innocently, if not profitably. Againſt the ſecond they may ſecure themſelves by a conſtant ſeries of Emploiments: I mean not ſuch frivolous ones as are more idle then doing nothing, but ſuch as are ingenuous, and ſome way worth their time: wherein as the firſt place is to be given to the offices of Piety, ſo in the Intervals of thoſe, there are divers others, by which they may not unuſefully fill up the vacancies of their time: ſuch are the acquiring of any of thoſe ornamental improvements which become their Quality, as Writing, Needle-works, Languages, Muſic, or the like. If I ſhould here inſert the Art of Oeconomy and Houſhold Managery, I ſhould not think I affronted them in it; that being the moſt proper Feminine buſineſs, from which neither wealth nor greatneſs can totally abſolve them: and a little of the Theory in their Parents houſe, would much aſſiſt them towards the Practic when they come to their own. In a word, there are many parts of knowledg uſeful for civil as well as Divine Life; and the improving themſelves in any of thoſe, is a rational Emploiment.

10. But I confeſs I know not how to reduce to that Head many of thoſe things which from divertiſements, are now ſtept up to be the ſolemn buſineſs of many young Ladies, (and I doubt of ſome old.) Such is in

the first place Gaming, a Recreation whose lawfulness I question not, whilst it keeps with, in the bounds of a Recreation: but when it sets up for a Calling, I know not whence it derives its licence. And a Calling sure it seems to be with some; a laborious one too, such as they toil night and day at, nay, do not allow themselves that remission which the Laws both of God and Man have provided for the meanest Mechanic. The Sabbath is to them no day of rest, but this Trade goes on when all Shops are shut. I know not how they satisfie themselves in such an habitual waste of their time, (besides all the incidental faults of Avarice and Anger) but I much doubt that Plea, whatsoever it is which passes with them, will scarce hold weight at his Tribunal, who has commanded us to *redeem*, not fling away *our time*.

11. There is another thing to which some devote a very considerable part of their time, and that is the reading Romances, which seems now to be thought the peculiar and only becoming study of young Ladies. I confess their Youth may a little adapt it to them when they were Children, and I wish they were alwaies in their event as harmless; but I fear they often leave ill impressions behind them. Those amorous Passions, which 'tis their design to paint to the utmost Life, are apt to insinuate themselves into their unwary

wary Readers, and by an unhappy inversion, a Copy shall produce an Original. When a poor young Creature shall read there of some triumphant Beauty, that has I know not how many captiv'd Knights prostrate at her feet, she will probably be temted to think it a fine thing; and may reflect how much she loses time, that has not yet subdu'd one heart: and then her business will be to spread her nets, lay her toils to catch some body who will more fatally ensnare her. And when she has once wound her self into an Amour, those Authors are subtil Casuists for all difficult cases that may occur in it, will instruct in the necessary Artifices of deluding Parents and Friends, and put her ruine perfectly in her own power. And truly this seems to be so natural a consequent of this sort of study, that of all the divertisements that look so innocently, they can scarce fall upon any more hazardous. Indeed, 'tis very difficult to imagine what vast mischief is don to the World, by the false notions and images of things; particularly of Love and Honor, those noblest concerns of human life, represented in these Mirrors. But when we consider upon what Principles the Duellists and Hectors of the Age defend their Outrages, and how great a Devotion is paid to Lust, instead of virtuous Love, we cannot be to seek for the Gospel which makes these Doctrines appear Orthodox,

12. As

12. As for the Entertainments which they find abroad, they may be innocent, or otherwise, according as they are managed. The common entercourse of Civility, is a debt to Humanity, and therefore mutual Visits may often be necessary; and so (in some degree) may be several harmless and healthful recreations which may call them abroad, for I write not now to Nuns, and have no purpose to confine them to a Cloister. Yet on the other side to be alwayes wandring, is the condition of a Vagabond; and of the two, 'tis better to be a Prisoner to ones home, then a Stranger. *Solomon* links it with some very unlaudable qualities of a Woman, *Proverbs* 7. 11. that *her feet abide not in her house*; and 'tis an unhappy impotence not to be able to stay at home, when there is any thing to be seen abroad: that any Mask, or Revel, any Jollity of others must be their rack and torment, if they cannot get to it. Alas, such Meetings are not so sure to be safe, that they had need be frequent, and they are of all others least like to be safe to those, who much dote on them. And therefore those that find they do so, had need to counterbiass their minds, and set them to somthing better, and by more serious entertainments supplant those Vanities, which at the best are childish, and may often prove worse; it being too probable that those *Dinah*'s which are still gadding, tho

tho on pretence to ſee only the Daughters of the Land, *Gen.* 34. may at laſt meet with a ſon of *Hamor*.

13. There is alſo another great Devourer of time ſubſervient to the former, I mean Dreſſing: for they that love to be ſeen much abroad, will be ſure to be ſeen in the moſt exact form. And this is an emploiment that does not ſteal but challenge their time; what they waſt here is *cum Privilegio*, it being by the verdict of this Age the proper buſineſs, the one Science wherein a young Lady is to be perfectly verſt: ſo that now all virtuous emulation is to be converted into this ſingle Ambition, who ſhall excel in this Faculty. A Vanity which I confeſs is more excuſable in the youngeſt then the elder ſort; they being ſuppoſable not yet to have outworn the reliques of their Child-hood, to which toies and gaiety were proportionable. Beſides, 'tis ſure allowable upon a ſoberer account, that they who deſign Marriage, ſhould give themſelves the advantage of decent Ornaments, and not by the negligent rudeneſs of their Dreſs belie Nature, and render themſelves leſs amiable then ſhe has made them. But all this being granted, 'twill by no means juſtifie that exceſſive curioſity and ſolicitude, that expence of time and mony too which is now uſed. A very moderate degree of all theſe will ſerve for that or-

ordinary decency which they need provide for, will keep them from the reproch of an affected Singularity, which is as much as a ſober Perſon need take care for. And I muſt take leave to ſay, that in order to Marriage, ſuch a moderation is much likelier to ſucceed then the contrary extravagance. Among the prudenter ſort of Men I am ſure it is, if it be not among the looſe and vain, againſt which 'twill be their guard, and ſo do them the greater ſervice. For certainly, he that chuſes a Wife for thoſe qualities for which a wiſe Man would refuſe her, underſtands ſo little what Marriage is, as portends no great felicity to her that ſhall have him. But if they deſire to marry Men of ſobriety and diſcretion, they are obliged in juſtice to bring the ſame qualities they expect, which will be very ill evidenced by that exceſs and vanity we now ſpeak of.

14. For to ſpeak a plain (tho perhaps ungrateful) truth, this (together with ſome of the modiſh liberties now in uſe) is it, which keeps ſo many young Ladies about the Town unmarried, till they loſe the Epithet of young. Sober men are afraid to venture upon a humor ſo diſagreeing to their own, leaſt whil'ſt (according to the Primitive reaſon of Marriage) they ſeek a help, they eſpouſe a ruine. But this is eſpecially dreadful to a plain Country Gentleman, who looks upon one of theſe fine

fine Women as a gaudy Idol, to whom if he once become a Votary, he muſt ſacrifice a great part of his fortune, and all his content. How reaſonable that apprehenſion is, the many wracks of conſiderable Families do too evidently atteſt. But I preſume ſome of the nicer Ladies have ſuch a contemt of any thing that they pleaſe to call Ruſtic, that they will not much regret the averting of thoſe whom they ſo deſpiſe. They will not, perhaps, while they are in purſuit or hopes of others; but when thoſe fail, theſe will be look'd on as a welcome Reſerve: and therefore 'twill be no Prudence to cut themſelves off from that laſt reſort, leaſt they (as many have don) betake themſelves to much worſe. For as in many inſtances, 'tis the Country which feeds and maintains the grandeur of the Town; ſo of all commerces there, Marriage would ſooneſt fail, if all Rural ſupplies were cut off.

15. But I have purſued this Speculation farther then perhaps my Virgin Readers will thank me for: I ſhall return to that which it was brought to inforce, and beſeech them, that if not to Men, yet to approve themſelves to God, they will confine themſelves in the matter of their Dreſs, within the due limits of Decency and Sobriety. I ſhall not direct them to thoſe ſtrict rules which *Tertullian* and ſome other of the ancient Fathers have preſcrib'd in this matter; my Petition is only,

That our Virgins would at leaſt ſo take care of their Bodies, as Perſons that alſo have a Soul: which if they can be perſwaded to, they may reſerve much of their time for more worthy uſes then thoſe of the Comb, the Tullets, and the Glaſs. And truly, 'tis not a little their concern to do ſo, for this Spring of their age is that Critical Inſtant that muſt either confirm or blaſt the hopes of all the ſucceeding Seaſons. The minds of young People are uſually compared to a blank ſheet of Paper, equally capable of the beſt or the worſt Impreſſions: 'tis pity they ſhould be fill'd with childiſh Scrawls, and little inſignificant Figures, but 'tis ſhame and horror they ſhould be ſtain'd with any vicious Characters, any blots of Impurity or Diſhonor. To prevent which, let the ſevereſt notions of Modeſty and Honor be early and deeply impreſt upon their Souls, graven as with the point of a Diamond, that they may be as indelible as they are indiſpenſibly neceſſary to the Virgin ſtate.

16. THERE is alſo another very requiſit Quality, and that is Obedience. The younger ſort of Virgins are ſuppoſed to have Parents; or if any has bin ſo unhappy as to looſe them early, they commonly are left in the charge of ſome Friend or Guardian, that is to ſupply the place: ſo that they cannot be to ſeek to whom this Obedience is to be paid. And

it

it is no more their Duty then their Intereſt to pay it. Youth is apt to be fooliſh in its Deſigns, and heady in the purſuit of them; and there can be nothing more deplorable then to have it left to its ſelf. And therefore God, who permits not even the Brutes to deſtitute their young ones till they attain to the perfection of their Kind, has put Children under the guidance and protection of their Parents, till by the maturing of their judgments they are qualified to be their own Conductors. Now this Obedience (as that which is due to all other Superiors) is to extend it ſelf to all things that are either good or indifferent, and has no clauſe of exception, but only where the Command is unlawful. And in ſo wide a ſcene of Action, there will occur ſo many particular occaſions of ſubmiſſion, that they had need have a great reverence of their Parents judgments, and diſtruſt of their own. And if it ſhould happen that ſome Parents are not qualified to give them the former, yet the general imbecillity of their Age, will remain a conſtant ground of the latter: ſo that they may ſafelier venture themſelves to their Parents miſguidance then their own, by how much the errors of Humility and Obedience, are leſs malignant then thoſe of Preſumtion and Arrogance.

17. But this is a Doctrine which will ſcarce paſs for Orthodox with many of the

young Women of our daies, with whom 'tis prejudice enough againſt the prudenteſt advice, that it comes from their Parents. 'Tis the grand Ingenuity of theſe Times to turn every thing into Ridicule; and if a Girl can but rally ſmartly upon the ſober admonition of a Parent, ſhe concludes ſhe is the abler Perſon, takes her ſelf for a Wit, and the other for a Fop; (a Bug-bear word, deviſed to fright all ſerioufneſs and ſobriety out of the World) and learns not only to diſobey, but to contemn. Indeed, the great confidence that Youth now ſeems to have of its ſelf, as it is very indecent, ſo it is extremly pernicious. Children that will attemt to go alone before their time., oft get dangerous falls: and when thoſe who are but little removed from Children, ſhall caſt off the wiſer conduct of others, they oft ſadly miſcarry by their own.

18. I know this Age has ſo great a contemt of the former, that 'tis but matter of ſcorn to alledg any of their Cuſtoms, elſe I ſhould ſay that the liberties that are taken now, would then have bin ſtartled at. They that ſhould then have ſeen a young Maid rambling abroad without her Mother, or ſome other prudent perſon, would have look'd on her as a ſtray, and thought it but a neighborly office to have brought her home: whereas now 'tis a rarity to ſee them in any company

pany graver then themſelves, and ſhe that goes with her Parent (unleſs it be ſuch a Parent as is as wild as her ſelf) thinks ſhe does but walk abroad with her Jailor. But ſure there are no ſmall miſchiefs that attend this liberty, for it leaves them perfectly to the choice of their company, a thing of too weighty an importance for giddy heads to determin; who will be ſure to elect ſuch as are of their own humor, with whom they may keep up a traffic of little impertinencies and trifling entertainments; and ſo by conſequence condemn themſelves never to grow wiſer, which they might do by an ingenious converſation. Nay, 'tis well if that negative ill be the worſt, for it gives opportunity to any that have ill deſigns upon them. It will be eaſie getting into their company, who have no guard to keep any body out, and as eaſie by little compliances and flatteries inſinuate into their good graces, who have not the ſagacity to diſcern to what inſiduous purpoſes thoſe blandiſhments are directed; and when they once begin to nibble at the bait, to be pleaſed with the Courtſhip, 'tis great odds they do not eſcape the hook.

19. Alas, how many poor innocent creatures have bin thus indiſcernibly enſnared; have at firſt perhaps only liked the wit and raillery, perhaps the language and addreſs, then the freedom and good humor; till at laſt they come

come to like the Perſon. It is therfore a moſt neceſſary caution for young Women, not to truſt too much to their own Conduct, but to own their dependance on thoſe, to whom God and Nature has ſubjected them, and to look on it not as their reſtraint and burden, but as their ſhelter and protection. For where once the autority of a Parent comes to be deſpiſ'd, tho in the lighteſt inſtance, it laies the foundation of utmoſt diſobedience. She that will not be preſcrib'd to in the choice of her ordinary diverting company, will leſs be ſo in chuſing the fixt companion of her Life; and we find it often eventually true, that thoſe who govern themſelves in the former, will not be govern'd by their friends in the later, but by pre-engagements of their own prevent their elections for them.

20. AND this is one of the higheſt injuries they can do their Parents, who have ſuch a native right in them, that 'tis no leſs an injuſtice then diſobedience to diſpoſe of themſelves without them. This right of the Parent is ſo undoubted, that we find God himſelf gives way to it, and will not ſuffer the moſt holy pretence, no not that of a Vow, to invade it, as we may ſee his own ſtating of the caſe, *Numb.* 30. How will he then reſent it, to have this ſo indiſpiſable a Law violated upon the impulſe of an impotent paſſion,

paſſion, an amorous inclination? Nor is the folly leſs then the ſin: they injure and afflict their Parents, but they generally ruin and undo themſelves. And that upon a double account, firſt as to the ſecular part. Thoſe that are ſo raſh as to make ſuch matches, cannot be imagined ſo provident as to examine how agreeable 'tis to their intereſt, or to contrive for any thing beyond the Marriage. The thoughts of their future temporal conditions (like thoſe of the eternal) can find no room amidſt their fooliſh raptures; but as if Love were indeed that Deity which the Poets feigned, they depend on it for all, and take no farther care. And event does commonly too ſoon inſtruct them in the deceitfulneſs of that truſt; love being ſo unable to ſupport them, that it cannot maintain its ſelf; but quickly expires when it has brought the Lovers into thoſe ſtraits, from whence it cannot reſcue them. So that indeed it does but play the decoy with them, brings them into the nooſe, and then retires. For when ſecular wants begin to pinch them, all the tranſports of their kindneſs do uſually convert into mutual accuſations, for having made each other miſerable.

21. And indeed there is no reaſon to expect any better event, becauſe in the ſecond place they forfeit their title to the Divine Bleſſing; nay, they put themſelves out of the capacity

pacity to ask it, it being a ridiculous impudence to beg of God to prosper the transgressions of his Law. Such Weddings seem to invoke some of the Poetic Romantic Deities, *Venus* and *Hymen*, from whence they derive a happiness as fictitious as are the Gods that are to send it. Let all Virgins therefore Religiously observe this part of Obedience to their Parents, that they may not only have their benediction, but Gods. And to that purpose let this be laid as a fundamental rule, that they never hearken to any proposal of Marriage made them from any other hand; but when any such overture is made, divert the address from her self, and direct it to her Parents, which will be the best test imaginable for any pretender. For if he know himself worthy of her, he will not fear to avow his design to them; and therefore if he decline that, 'tis a certain symtom, he is conscious of something he knows will not give a valuable consideration; so that this course will repel no suitor but such as it is their interest not to admit. Besides, 'tis most agreeable to the Virgin modesty, which should make Marriage an act rather of their obedience then their choice; and they that think their Friends too slow paced in the matter, and seek to out-run them, give cause to suspect they are spurr'd on by somwhat too warm desires.

22. But

22. But as a Daughter is neither to anticipate, nor contradict the will of her Parent, ſo (to hang the balance even) I muſt ſay ſhe is not obliged to force her own, by marrying where ſhe cannot love; for a negative voice in the caſe is ſure as much the childs right, as the Parents. It is true, ſhe ought well to examine the grounds of her averſion, and if they prove only childiſh and fanciful, ſhould endeavor to correct them by reaſon and ſober conſideration; if after all ſhe cannot leave to hate, I think ſhe ſhould not proceed to marry. I confeſs I ſee not how ſhe can, without a Sacrilegious hypocriſie, vow ſo ſolemnly to love where ſhe at the inſtant actually abhors: and where the married ſtate is begun with ſuch a perjury, 'tis no wonder to find it continued at the ſame rate, that other parts of the Vow be alſo violated; and that ſhe obſerve the negative part no more then the poſitive, and as little forſake others, as ſhe does heartily cleave to her huſband. I fear this is a conſequence whereof there are too many ſad inſtances now extant; for tho doubtleſs, there are ſome Vertues which will hold out againſt all the temtations their averſions can give, nay which do at laſt even conquer thoſe averſions, and render their duty as eaſie as they have kept it ſafe; yet we find there are but ſome that do ſo; that it is no inſeparable property of the Sex, and therefore it is ſure too hazardous an Experi-

ment for any of them to venture on.

23. And if they may not upon the more generous motive of obedience, much leſs may they upon the worſe inducements of Avarice and Ambition; for a Woman to make a Vow to the Man, and yet intend only to marry his Fortune, or his Title, is the baſeſt inſincerity, and ſuch as in any other kind of civil Contracts, would not only have the infamy but the puniſhment of a cheat. Nor will it at all ſecure them, that in this 'tis only liable to Gods Tribunal: for that is not like to make the doom leſs, but more heavy, it being as the Apoſtle witneſſes, *a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,* Heb. 10.31. In a word, Marriage is Gods Ordinance, and ſhould be conſider'd as ſuch; not made a ſtale to any unworthy deſign. And it may well be preſum'd one cauſe why ſo few Matches are happy, that they are not built upon a right Foundation. Some are grounded upon Wealth, ſome on Beauty, too ſandy bottoms God knows to raiſe any felicity on: whilſt in the interim, Vertue and Piety, the only ſolid Baſis for that ſuperſtructure, are ſcarce ever conſider'd. Thus God is commonly left out of the conſultation. The Lawyers are reſorted to, to ſecure the ſettlements, all ſorts of Artificers to make up the equipage, but He is neither adviſ'd with as to the motives, nor ſcarce ſupplicated as to the event of Wedding. Indeed, 'tis a deplorable

ſight

ſight to ſee with what lightneſs and unconcernedneſs young people go to that weightieſt action of their lives; that a Marriage-day is but a kind of a Bacchanal, a more licenſed avowed Revel: when, if they duly conſider'd it, 'tis the hinge upon which their future Life moves, which turns them over to a happy or miſerable Being; and therefore ought to be enter'd upon with the greateſt ſerioufneſs and devotion. Our Church adviſes excellently in the Preface to Matrimony: and I wiſh they would not only give it the hearing at the time, but make it their ſtudy a good while before: yea and the Marriage Vow too; which is ſo ſtrict and awful a Bond, that methinks they had need well weigh every branch of it, ere they enter it; and by the ferventeſt Praiers implore that God, who is the Witneſs, to be their aſſiſtant too in its performance.

SECT. II.

Of Wives,

1. AND now having conducted the Virgin to the entrance of another ſtate, I muſt ſhift the Scene, and attend her thither alſo. And here ſhe is lanched into a wide Sea, that one Relation of a Wife drawing after it many others: for as ſhe eſpouſes the man, ſo ſhe does his Obligations alſo: and where-ever he by ties of Nature or Alliance owes a reverence or kindneſs, ſhe is no leſs a debtor. Her Marriage is an adoption into his Family, and therefore ſhe is to every branch of it to pay what their ſtations there do reſpectively require. To define which more particulary, would be a work of more length then profit, I ſhall therefore confine the preſent conſideration to the relation ſhe ſtands in to her Husband (and what is uſually concomitant with that) her Children, and her Servants, and ſo ſhall conſider her in the three capacities of a Wife, a Mother, and a Miſtreſs.

2. IN that of a Wife her duty has ſeveral aſpects, as it relates, firſt to his Perſon, ſecondly to his Reputation, thirdly to his Fortune. The firſt debt to his Perſon is Love, which we find ſet as the prime Article in the mar-

Marriage Vow. And indeed that is the moſt eſſential requiſite; without this 'tis only a Bargain and Compact, a Tyranny perhaps on the mans part, and a ſlavery on the womans. 'Tis Love only that cements the hearts, and where that union is wanting, tis but a ſhadow, a carcaſs of Marriage. Therefore as it is very neceſſary to bring ſome degree of this to this ſtate; ſo tis no leſs to maintain and improve it in it. This is it which facilitates all other Duties of Marriage; makes the yoke ſit ſo lightly, that it rather pleaſes then galls. It ſhould therefore be the ſtudy of Wives to preſerve this Flame; that like the Veſtal Fire it may never go out: and to that end carefully to guard it from all thoſe things which are naturally apt to extinguiſh it; of which kind are all frowardneſs and little perverſneſs of humor; all ſullen and moroſe behavior, which by taking off from the delight and complacency of converſation, will by degrees wear off the kindneſs.

3. But of all I know nothing more dangerous then that unhappy paſſion of Jealouſy, which tho tis ſaid to be the child of love, yet like the Viper, its birth is the certain deſtruction of the parent. As therefore they muſt be nicely careful to give their husbands no color, no leaſt umbrage for it; ſo ſhould they be as reſolute to reſiſt all that occurs to themſelves, be ſo far from that buſy curioſity, that induſtry

induſtry to find cauſes of ſuſpicion; that even where they preſented themſelves they ſhould avert the conſideration; put the moſt candid conſtruction upon any doubtful action. And indeed Charity in this inſtance has not more of the Dove then of the Serpent. It is infinitly the wiſeſt courſe, both in relation to her preſent quiet, and her future innocence. The entertaining a Jealous fancy, is the admitting the moſt treacherous, the moſt diſturbing In-mate in the World; and ſhe opens her breaſt to a Fury that lets it in. 'Tis certainly one of the moſt enchanting Frenzies imaginable, keeps her alwaies in a moſt reſtleſs importunate ſearch after that which ſhe dreads and abhors to find, and makes her equally miſerable when ſhe is injured, and when ſhe is not.

4. And as ſhe totally loſes her Eaſe, ſo tis odds but ſhe will part alſo with ſome degrees of her innocence. Jealouſy is commonly attended with a black train: it muſters all the forces of our iraſcible part to abet its quarrel, Wrath and Anger, Malice and Revenge: and by how much the Female impotence to govern thoſe Paſſions is the greater, ſo much the more dangerous is it to admit that which will ſo ſurely ſet them in an uprore. For if *Jealouſie* be, as the Wiſe Man ſaies, *the rage of a man*, Prov. 6. 32. we may well think it may be the Fury, the Madneſs of

of a Woman. And indeed all Ages have given Tragical inſtances of it, not only in the moſt indecent fierceneſs and clamor, but in the ſolemn miſchiefs of actual Revenges. Nay tis to be doubted there have bin ſome whoſe malice has rebounded; who have ruined themſelves in ſpight, have bin adulterous by way of retaliation, and taken more ſcandalous liberties then thoſe they complained of in their Husbands. And when ſuch enormous effects as theſe are the iſſues of jealouſie, it ought to keep a Woman on the ſtricteſt guard againſt it.

5. But perhaps it may be ſaid, that ſome are not left to their Jealouſy and conjectures, but have more demonſtrative proofs. In this Age tis indeed no ſtrange thing for men to publiſh their ſin as *Sodom*, and the Offender do's ſomtimes not diſcover but boaſt his crime. In this caſe I confeſs twill be ſcarce poſſible to disbelieve him: but even here a Wife has this advantage, that ſhe is out of the pain of ſuſpence. She knows the utmoſt, and therefore is at leſure to convert all that induſtry which ſhe would have uſed for that diſcovery, to fortify her ſelf againſt a known Calamity; which ſure ſhe may as well do in this as in any other; a patient ſubmiſſion being the one Catholicon in all Diſtreſſes; and as the ſlighteſt can overwhelm us if we add our own impatience towards our ſinking, ſo the greateſt

eſt cannot if we deny it that aid. They are therefore far in the wrong, who, in caſe of this injury, purſue their husbands with virulencies and reproches. This is, as *Solomon* ſaies, *Prov.* 25. 20. *The pouring vineger upon niter*, applying Corroſives when Baſſoms are moſt needed, whereby they not only encreaſe their own ſmart, but render the wound incurable. They are not Thunders and Earth-quakes, but ſoft gentle Rains that cloſe the ſciſſures of the ground; and the breaches of Wedloc will never be cemented by ſtorms and loud out-cries. Many men have bin made worſe, but ſcarce any better by it: for guilt covets nothing more then an opportunity of recriminating; and where the Husband can accuſe the Wives bitterneſs, he thinks he needs no other apology for his own Luſt.

A wiſe Diſſimulation, or very calm notice is ſure the likelieſt means of reclaming: for where men have not wholly put off Humanity, there is a native compaſſion to a meek ſufferer. We have naturally ſome regret to ſee a Lamb under the knife; whereas the impatient roaring of a Swine diverts our pity: ſo that Patience in this caſe is as much the intereſt as duty of a Wife.

7. But there is another inſtance wherein that vertue has a ſeverer trial, and that is when a Wife lies under the cauſeleſs Jealouſies of the Husband, (I ſay cauſeleſs, for if they be juſt

juſt, 'tis not ſo much a ſeaſon for Patience, as for Repentance and Reformation.) This is ſure one of the greateſt calamities that can befal a vertuous Woman; who as ſhe accounts nothing ſo dear as her loialty and honor, ſo thinks no infelicity can equal the aſperſing of thoſe, eſpecially when it is from him, to whom ſhe has bin the moſt ſolicitous to approve her ſelf. Yet God, who permits nothing but what he directs to ſome wiſe and gracious end, has an over-ruling hand in this as well as in all other events of life; and therefore it becomes every woman in that condition, to examin ſtrictly what ſhe has don to provoke ſo ſevere a ſcourge. For tho her heart condemn her not of any Falſneſs to her husband, yet probably it may of many Diſloialties to her God; and then ſhe is humbly to accept even of this traducing of her Innocence, as the puniſhment of her iniquity, and bear it with the ſame temper wherewith *David* did the unjuſt revilings of *Shimei*, 2 Kings 16. 10. *Let him curſe, for the Lord hath bidden him.*

8. And when ſhe has made this penitent reflection on her real guilts, ſhe may then with more courage encounter thoſe imaginary ones which are charged on her: wherein ſhe is to uſe all prudent and regular means for her juſtification, that being a debt ſhe ows to truth, and her own fame. But if after all, the ſuſpicion remains ſtill fixed (as common-

ly those which are the most unreasonable are the most obstinate) she may still solace her self in her Integrity, and Gods approbation of it: nor ought she to think her self desolate, that has her appeal open to Heaven. Therefore whilst she can look both inward and upward with comfort, why should she chuse to fix her eyes only on the object of her grief? and whilst her own complaint is of Defamation, why should she so dishonor God and a good Conscience, as to shew any thing can be more forcible to oppress, then they are to relieve and support? And if she may not indulge to Grief, much less may she to Anger and Bitterness.

9. INDEED if she consider how painful a passion Jealousie is, her Husband will more need her pity; who tho he be unjust to her, is yet cruel to himself. And as we do not use to hate and malign those Lunatics, who in their fits beat their Friends, and cut and gash themselves, but rather make it our care to put all harmful engines out of their way; so should the Wife not despitefully ruminate upon the injury, but wisely contrive to avert his temptations to more, by denying her self even the most innocent liberties, if she see they dissatisfy him. I know there have bin some of another opinion; and as if they thought Jealousy were to be cured by majoration, have in an angry contemt don things to inflame it,

it, put on an unwonted freedom and jollity, to ſhew their Husbands how little they had ſecur'd themſelves by their diſtruſt. But this as it is no Chriſtian, ſo I conceive it is no prudent expedient: it ſerves to ſtrengthen not only the Husbands ſuſpicion, but his party too, and makes many others of his mind: and 'tis a little to be feared, that by uſing ſo to brave the Jealouſy, they may at laſt come to verify it. I have bin the longer on this Theme, becauſe as Jealouſy is the moſt fatal peſt of a married life, ſo I think it more ordinarily occurs among people of Quality, and with the worſt and moſt durable effects. Yet what ever pretences people may take hence, the Marriage Vow is too faſt a knot to be looſned by fancies and Chimeras: let a woman therefore be the perſon ſuſpecting or ſuſpected, neither will abſolve her from that love to her husband ſhe has ſworn to pay.

10. But alas, what hope is there that theſe greater temtations shall be reſiſted, when we ſee every the ſlighteſt diſguſt is now adaies too ſtrong for the Matrimonial Love. Nay indeed it do's of courſe fall off of its ſelf; which is an event ſo much expected, that 'tis no wonder to ſee it expire with the firſt circuit of the Moon; but it is every bodies admiration to ſee it laſt one of the Sun. And ſomtimes it vaniſhes ſo cleerly, as not to leave ſo much as a shadow behind it, not ſo much

as the formalities of Marriage: one bed, one house cannot hold them: as if they had bin put together like case-shot in a gun, only that they might the more forcibly scatter several waies. Nay, as if this were designed and intended in the first addresses unto Marriage, a separate maintenance is of course a fore hand contracted for, and becomes as solemn a part of the settlement, as the Jointure is. *Plutarch* observes of the ancient Romans, that for 230 years after the founding of their State, there never was one example of any Married couple that separated: it is not likely they could have a more binding form of Marriage then ours is, the difference must lie between their Veracity and our Falsness.

11. But even amongst those who desert not each other, too many do mutually fall from that Entireness and Affection which is the soul of Marriage; and to help on the declination, there are fashionable Maxims taken up, to make men and their wives the greatest strangers to each other. Thus 'tis pronounced a piece of ill Breeding, a sign of a Country Gentleman, to see a man go abroad with his own wife (I suppose those who brought up these Rules are not to seek what use to make of them.) And were the time of most of the modish couples computed, 'twould be found they are but few of their waking hours (I might say minutes) together: so that if nothing

thing elſe, meer deſuetude and intermiſſion of converſation muſt needs allay, if not quite extinguiſh their kindneſs. But I hope there are yet many who do not think the Autority of a faſhion greater then that of a Vow: and ſuch will ſtill think it their duty both to own and cherish that kindneſs and affection they have ſo ſolemnly promiſ'd.

12. Another Debt to the perſon of a husband is Fidelity: for as ſhe has eſpouſed all his intereſts, ſo she is oblig'd to be true to them, keep all his ſecrets, to inform him of his dangers, yea and in a mild and gentle manner to admonish him of his faults. This is the moſt genuine act of Friendship; therefore ſhe who is placed in the neereſt and moſt intimate degree of that Relation, muſt not be wanting in it. She that lies in his boſom should be a kind of ſecond Conſcience to him, by putting him in mind both of his duty and his aberration: and as long as ſhe can be but patiently heard, 'tis her ſin to omit it; 'tis the greateſt trechery to his nobleſt, to his immortal part, and ſuch as the moſt officious cares of his other intereſts can never expiate. Nay, indeed she is unfaithful to her ſelf in it, there being nothing that does ſo much ſecure the happineſs of a Wife, as the Vertue and Piety of the Husband. Yet, tho this is to have her chiefeſt care, as being his principal intereſt, she is to neglect none of the inferior, but contribute

tribute her utmoſt to his advantage in all his concerns.

13. Beyond all theſe the Matrimonial fidelity has a ſpecial notion as it relates to the Bed; and in that the wife is to be moſt ſeverely ſcrupulous, and never to admit ſo much as a thought or imagination, much leſs any parly or treaty contrary to her Loialty. Tis true, wantonneſs is one of the fouleſt blots that can ſtain any of the Sex; but tis infinitly more odious in the Married, it being in them an accumulation of crimes, Perjury added to Uncleanneſs, the infamy of their Family ſuperſtructed upon their own. And accordingly all Laws have made a difference in their punishments. Adultery was by Gods own award punisht with Death among the Jews, *Levit.* 20. 10. And it ſeems it was ſo agreeable to Natural Juſtice, that divers other Nations did the like; and I know no reaſon, but the difficulty of detection, that ſhould any where give it a milder ſentence. The ſon of *Sirach* has excellently deſcrib'd the ſeveral gradations of the guilt, *Eccluſ.* 23. 1. which I ſhall deſire the Reader to conſult; which who ſo does, muſt certainly wonder at the Alchymy of this age, that from ſuch a maſs of ſhame and infamy can extract matter of confidence: that thoſe who lie under ſo many brands and ſtigma's, are ſo far from hiding their faces, that none ſhew them with ſo much boldneſs, and

and the aſſurance of the guilty far exceeds that of the innocent. But impudence is a ſlender ſhelter for guilt, and ſerves rather to betray then hide: ſo that they are not able to outface the opinions of men, much leſs can they the judgments of God; who as he was ſolemnly invok'd as Witneſs to their Vow, ſo by his Omnipreſence is againſt their wills a Witneſs too of its violations.

13. Another Duty to the perſon of the Husband is Obedience, a word of a very harſh ſound in the ears of ſome Wives, but is certainly the duty of all: and that not only by their promiſe of it, tho that were ſufficient; but from an Original of much older date, it being the mulct that was laid upon the firſt Womans diſobedience to God, that ſhe (and all derived from her) ſhould be ſubject to the Husband; ſo that the contending for ſuperiority, is an attemt to reverſe that Fundamental Law, which is almoſt as ancient as the world. But ſurely God, with whom there is no ſhadow of change, will not make acts of repeal to ſatisfy the petulancy of a few maſterleſs women. That Statute will ſtill ſtand in force, and if it cannot awe them into an obſervance, will not fail to conſign them to puniſhment. And indeed this fault is commonly its own lictor, and does anticipate (tho not avert) its final doom. The imperiouſneſs of a woman do's often raiſe thoſe Storms, wherein

wherein her ſelf is ſhip-wrack'd. How pleaſantly might many Women have lived, if they had not affected dominion? Nay, how much of their will might they have had, if they had not ſtrugled for it? For let a man be of never ſo gentle a temper, (unleſs his Head be ſofter then his Heart) ſuch a Uſurpation will awake him to aſſert his Right. But if he be of a ſowre ſevere nature, if he have as great a deſire of Rule as ſhe, backt with a much better title, what Tempeſts, what Hurricanes muſt two ſuch oppoſite Winds produce? And at laſt 'tis commonly the Wives lot, after an uncreditable unjuſt War, to make as diſadvantageous a Peace; this (like all other ineffective Rebellions) ſerving to ſtraiten her Yoke, to turn an ingenuous ſubjection into a ſlaviſh ſervitude: ſo that certainly it is not only the vertue, but the wiſdom of Wives, to do that upon Duty which at laſt they muſt (with more unſupportable circumſtances) do upon Neceſſity.

15. AND as they owe theſe Severals to the perſon of the Husband, ſo there is alſo a debt to his Reputation. This they are to be extremely tender of, to advance it, by making all that is good in him as conſpicuous, as public as they can; ſetting his Worth in the cleareſt Light, but putting his Infirmities in the Shade; caſting a Veil upon thoſe to skreen them from the Eies of others, nay (as far as is

is poſſible) from their own too; there being nothing acquir'd to the Wife by contemplating the Husbands weakneſs, but a temtation of deſpiſing him; which tho bad enough in it ſelf, is yet rendred worſe by that train of miſchievous conſequences which uſually attend it. In caſe therefore of any notable Imperfections in him, her ſafeſt way will be to conſider them no farther then ſhe can be inſtrumental to the curing them; but to divert from thoſe, and reflect upon her own, which perhaps if impartially weighed, may balance, if not overpoiſe his. And indeed thoſe Wives who are apt to blaze their Husbands Faults, do ſhew that they have either little adverted to their own, or elſe find them ſo great, that they are forced to that Art of diverſion, that ſeek in his Infamy to drown theirs. But that project is a little unlucky, for nothing do's in ſober Judges, create greater prejudice to a Woman, then to ſee her forward in impeaching her Husband.

16. But beſides this immediate tenderneſs of his Reputation, there is another by-way of reflection, which conſiſts in a care that ſhe her ſelf do nothing which may redound to his diſhonor. There is ſo ſtrict a Union between a Man and his Wife, that the Law counts them one Perſon, and conſequently they can have no divided Intereſt: ſo that the misbehavior of the Woman reflects igno-

miniouſly on the Man. It therefore concerns them, as well upon their Husbands as their own account, to abſtain even from all appearance of evil, and provide that themſelves be (what *Ceſar* is ſaid to have requir'd of his Wife) not only without guilt, but without ſcandal alſo.

17. ANOTHER part of the Wives Duty relates to her Husbands Fortune, the management whereof is not ordinarily the Wives Province: but where the Husbands thinks fit to make it ſo, ſhe is oblig'd to adminiſter it with her beſt Care and Induſtry; not by any neglect of hers to give others opportunity of defrauding him: yet on the other ſide, not by an immoderate tenacity or griping, to bring upon him and her ſelf the reproch, and which is worſe, the Curſe that attends Exaction and Oppreſſion. But this is not uſually the Wives field of action, tho he that ſhall conſider the deſcription which *Solomon* gives of a vertuous Wife, *Prov.* 31. will be apt to think her Province is not ſo narrow and confin'd, as the humor of the Age would repreſent it. He tells us, *That ſhe ſeeks wool and flax, and works diligently with her hands: that ſhe is like the merchants ſhips, and brings her food from far.* That *ſhe conſiders a field, and buys it, and with the fruit of her hands plants a vineyard, &c.* And leaſt this ſhould be imagin'd to be the Character of a mean Country

try Dame, adds, That *her houſhold is clothed in ſcarlet*, and that *her husband ſits among the elders of the land.* It were eaſie to give inſtances from Hiſtory, of the advantageous menage and active induſtry of Wives, not only in ſingle Perſons, but in whole Nations. But nothing can be more pregnant, then that among the Romans, in the very height and floriſh of the Empire. *Auguſtus* himſelf *ſcarce wore any thing but of the manufacture of his wife, his ſiſter, daughters, and nieces*, as *Suetonius* aſſures us. Should the gay *lilies of our fields, which neither ſow nor ſpin, nor gather into barns*, be exemted from furniſhing others, and left to cloth themſelves, tis to be doubted they would reverſe our Saviors Parallel of *Solomons glories*, and no beggar in all his rags *would be araied like one of theſe*, Luke 12. 27.

18. BUT we will be yet more kind, and impoſe only negative thrift on the Wife, not to waſt and embezle her Husbands Eſtate, but to confine her Expences within ſuch limits as that can eaſily admit: a Caution, which if all women had obſerv'd, many noble Families had bin preſerv'd, of which there now remains no other Memorial, but that they fell a Sacrifice to the profuſe Vanity of a woman; and I fear this Age is like to provide many more ſuch Monuments for the next. Our Ladies, as if they emulated the Roman Luxury (which *Seneca* and *Pliny* de-

ſcribe with ſo much indignation) do ſometimes wear about them the Revenues of a rich Family; and thoſe that cannot reach to that, ſhew how much tis againſt their wills they fell lower, by the vaſt variety and exceſs of ſuch things as they can poſſibly compaſs; ſo much extravagance not only in their own Dreſs, but that of their Houſes and Apartments, as if their vanity, like the Leproſie we read of, *Lev.* 14. had infected the very Walls. And indeed, tis a very ſpreading fretting one, for the Furniture oft conſumes the Houſe, and the Houſe conſumes the Land: ſo that if ſome Gentlemen were to calculate their Eſtates, they might reduce all to the Inventory of *Scopias* the *Theſſalian*, who profeſt his All lay only in ſuch Toies as did him no good. Women are now skilful Chymiſts, and can quickly turn their Husbands Earth into Gold: but they purſue the Experiment too far, make that Gold too volatile, and let it all vapor away in inſignificant (tho gaudy) Trifles.

19. NOR is it ever like to be otherwiſe with thoſe that immoderatly affect the Town, that Forge of Vanity, which ſupplies a perpetual Spring of new temtations. Tis true, there are ſome Ladies who are neceſſarily engaged to be there: their Husbands Emploiments or Fortunes have mark'd that out as their proper ſtation, and where the ground of

of their ſtay is their duty, there is more reaſon to hope it will not betray them to ill; for temtations are moſt apt to aſſault ſtraglers, thoſe that put themſelves out of their proper road. And truly I ſee not who can more properly be ſaid to be ſo, then thoſe Women whoſe means of ſubſiſtence lies in the Country, and yet will ſpend it no where but at *London:* which ſeems to carry ſomthing of oppoſition to Gods Providence, who ſurely never cauſed their lot to fall, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, *in a fair ground, in goodly heritages*, Pſal. 16. with an intent they ſhould never inhabit them. The 12. Tribes of *Iſrael* had their peculiar Portions in *Canaan* aſſign'd them by lot, *Joſ.* 14. 2. and every one acquieſced in his part, dwelt in his own Inheritance. Had they bin impatient of living any where but in the Metropolis, had they all crouded to *Jeruſalem*, all the reſt of the Land would have bin as deſolate before the Captivity as it was after, none would have bin left but ſuch as *Nabuzaradan* permitted to ſtay, *Jer.* 52. 16. *ſome of the poor to dreſs the vines, and to till the ground.* And truly, the ſame is like to be the fate of this Nation, if this humor go's on as it has begun; which may in time prove as miſchievous to the public, as it daily is to private Families.

20. But beſides this 'tis yet farther to be conſider'd, that where God gives an eſtate, he

he as the ſupreme Landlord affixes ſomthing of duty, laies a kind of rent charge upon it, expects it ſhould maintain both hoſpitality and charity; and ſure both theſe are fitteſt to be don upon the place whence the ability of them riſes. All public taxes uſe to be levied where the eſtate lies: and I know not why theſe which are Gods aſſeſments upon it, ſhould not be paid there too. When a Gentlemans land becomes profitable unto him by the ſweat and labor of his poor neighbors and tenants, twill be a kind of *muzling the ox*, 1 *Cor*, 9 9 if they never taſt of the fruit of their pains, if they ſhall never have the refreſhment of a good meal, or an alms; which they are not very like to meet with, if all the profits be ſent up to maintain an equipage, and keep up a parade in Town. But alas 'tis often not only the annual profits that go that way, not only the crop, but the ſoil too: thoſe luxuries uſually prey upon the vitals, eat out the very heart of an eſtate, and many have ſtay'd in the Town 'till they have nothing left in the Country to retire to.

21. Now where this proceeds from the Wife, what account can ſhe give to her Husband, whoſe eaſineſs and indulgence (for that muſt be ſuppos'd in the caſe) ſhe has ſo abus'd? as alſo to her poſterity and family, who for her pride muſt be brought low, reduc'd to a condition beneath their quality, be-

becauſe ſhe affected to live above it? But ſhe will yet worſe anſwer it to her ſelf, on whom ſhe has brought not only the inconvenience but the guilt. 'Tis ſure a lofty mind will feel ſmart enough of a fall; a diminution, much more an indigence will be ſufficiently grievous to a vain and laviſh humor; yet here it will farther have an additional ſting from the conſcience, that ſhe ows it only to her own pride and folly, a moſt imbittering conſideration, and ſuch as advances the affliction beyond that of a more innocent poverty; as much as the pain of an envenom'd arrow exceeds that of another.

22. But the ſaddeſt reckoning of all is that which ſhe is to make to God, who has declar'd he hates robbery tho for a burnt offering to himſelf. How will he then deteſt this robbery, this impoveriſhing of the husband, when tis only to make an oblation to vanity and exceſs? It ſhould therefore be the care of all Wives to keep themſelves from a guilt for which God and man, yea and themſelves alſo ſhall equally accuſe them, and to keep their expences within ſuch limits, that as Bees ſuck but do not violate or deface the flowers, ſo they as joint proprietaries with the husbands, may enjoy but not devour and deſtroy his fortune.

23. I have now run thro the duties to be perform'd unto the Husbands, wherein I have

not

not used the exactness of a casuist in curiously anatomizing every part, and shewing all the most minute particulars reducible to each head. I have only drawn out the greater lines, and insisted on those wherein Wives are most frequently deficient. I shall only add this caution, that what ever is duty to the husband, is equally so, be he good or ill. The Apostle commands subjection and fidelity even to Heathen Husbands, 1 *Pet.* 3. 12. and tis not now their defect either in Piety or Morality, that can absolve the Wife. For, besides the inconvenience of making her duty precarious, and liable to be substracted upon every pretence of demerit, she has by solemn Contract renounc'd that liberty, and in her Marriage-vow taken him for better for worse; and it is too late *after Vows to make enquiry*, Prov. 20. 25. to seek to break loose from the Bond of her Soul; and how uneasie soever the perverseness of the Husband may render it, he cannot thereby make it less, but more rewardable by God. For what the Apostle speaks in the case of Servants, is no less appliable to this, 1 *Pet.* 2. 19. for *this is thankworthy, if for conscience towards God ye endure grief, suffering wrongfully.* What ever duty is perform'd to Man with aspect on God, he owns it as to himself; so that how unworthy soever the Husband may be, the Wife cannot misplace her observance, whilst she finally ter-

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minates it on that infinit Goodneſs and Majeſty, to whom no love or obedience can be enough.

24. From this relation of a Wife, there ordinarily ſprings another, that of a Mother; to which there belongs a diſtinct duty, which may be branched into many ſeverals: but I ſhall at preſent only reduce them to two Heads, Love and Care. A Mother is a title of ſo much Tenderneſs, that we find it borrowed by our common Dialect to expreſs the moſt exuberant Kindneſs; nay, even in Sacred Style it has the ſame uſe, and is often ſet as the higheſt Example our weakneſs can comprehend of the Divine Compaſſions. So that Nature ſeems ſufficiently to have ſecur'd the love of Mothers to their Children, without the aid of any poſitive Law. Yet we find this (as other Inſtincts of Nature) is ſomtimes violated, and oftner perverted and applied to miſtaken purpoſes: the firſt is by a defect of Love; the other, by an imprudent exceſs of it. The defect do's, I preſume, more rarely occur then the other; yet it doth ſomtimes happen, and that either from a moroſe ſowrneſs of humor, or elſe from too vehement an intention on ſomthing elſe.

25. Some Women have ſuch a ruggedneſs of Nature, that they can love nothing. The ugly Paſſions of Anger and Envy have, like *Pharaoh*'s lean Kine, eat up the more amiable

able of Love and Joy. *Plato* was wont to adviſe crabbed auſtere Tempers, to ſacrifice to the *Graces*; and ſuch as theſe had need have a great deal of Chriſtian Philoſophy, to allay and ſweeten their native Bitterneſs. But there are others that are not void of the affection of Love, but tis fore-ſtall'd by ſome other Object, and ſo diverted from their Children. And tis a little to be doubted, thoſe Objects which ſo divert are none of the beſt. For the Wiſdom of God has diſpoſed all duty into ſuch a Harmony and Conſent of Parts, that one interferes not with another. If we love no prohibited thing, all the regular Objects of our kindneſs will agree well enough, and one need never ſupplant another. And indeed tis oft obſervable, that thoſe Women who immoderatly love their own Pleſures, do leſs regard their Children; they look on them as Clogs to keep them within doors, and think their adverting to them, will hinder their free range abroad; thoſe are turn'd off to the care of a Nurſe or Maid, whilſt perhaps a Dog or Monky is thought worthy their own attendance.

26. *Plutarch* relates it as a Sarcaſm of *Ceſars*, to ſome Foreigners whom he ſaw (at *Rome*) ſtrangely fond of ſuch little Animals, that he asked them, Whether the Women in their Country had no Children; thereby intimating, how unreaſonable it was for thoſe that

that had, to bestow their caresses on such Creatures. And surely he would not have given a milder Reprimand to some of our Ladies, who not only please, but pride themselves in those little Brutes, shew them to all Comers, when perhaps you may converse with them divers daies, before you shall, by any mention of theirs, know that they have a Child.

27. To the defect of Love, many are apt to impute the Mothers transferring the Nursing her Child to another. I am not forward to pronounce of it, being loth to involve so many as I then must in the imputation of unnaturalness; I rather think it is taken up as a piece of State and Greatness; for no other motive, but what is founded in their Quality, could so universally prevail with all that are of it. But sure this is one of the vain punctilio's wherewith this Age abounds. For what ever rank the Mother is of, the Child carries proportion to it, and there is the same equality between the greatest Lady and her own Child, as is between the meanest Beggars and hers: tho indeed if there were any condescension in it, the aversions of that ought not to outweigh the impulses of Nature, and the many advantages the Child may receive by taking its Nurishment whence it derived its Substance. And therefore, tho I will not be too positive in asserting the necessity, yet I con-

feſs, I cannot but look with reverence on thoſe few Perſons of Honor, who have broke thro an unreaſonable Cuſtom, and preferred the good of their Children before that fantaſtic privileg of Greatneſs. And ſuch muſt in all Juſtice be acknowledged to have given a much better evidence of their love to their Children, then the others.

28. THERE is in A. *Gellius*, in his fourteenth Book, ſo fine a Diſcourſe on this ſubject, where *Favorinus* the Philoſopher is introduced, perſwading a Noble Lady, notwithſtanding the uſual Excuſes, to nurſe her Child; that nothing beſides the length, could temt me to omit the tranſcribing it: unleſs happily the little ſucceſs, which a Noble Perſon of the ſame Sex here concern'd, I mean the Counteſs of *Lincoln*, in the Ingenuous Book wrote by her, and call'd her Nurſery, be a ſufficient ground of deſpairing to convince by any thing that can be ſaid. However, let theſe delicate ones conſider the ſevere words of the Prophet, *Lamen.* 4. 3. *The ſea monſters draw out the breaſt, they give ſuck to their young ones: the daughter of my people is become cruel like the oſtrich in the Wilderneſs, who is hardned againſt her young ones, as tho they were not hers: her labor is in vain without fear, becauſe God hath deprived her of wiſdom, neither hath he imparted to her underſtanding.* Job. 39. 16.

29. BUT

29. But as there may be a fault in the defect, ſo there may be alſo in the exceſs of love. God is the only unlimited object of our Love, towards all others 'tis eaſie to become inordinate, and in no inſtance more then this of children. The love of a parent is deſcending, and all things move moſt violently downwards: ſo that whereas that of children to their parents commonly needs a ſpur, this of the parent often needs a bridle; eſpecially that of the Mother, which (by ſtrength of feminine paſſion) do's uſually exceed the love of the Father. Now to regulate this affection, ſhe is to advert to theſe two rules, firſt that ſhe hurt not her ſelf by it, and ſecondly that ſhe hurt not her children. Of the firſt ſhe is in danger if ſhe ſuffer that Human affection to ſwell beyond its banks, ſo as to come in any competition with the Divine. This is to make an Idol of her child: for every thing is ſo to us, which rivals the love of God in our hearts: and he who owns the title of a Jealous God, may be provoked as well by our bowing our ſouls to a living image, as the proſtration of our bodies to a dead. Accordingly we oft ſee the effects of his Jealouſy in this particular. The doting affection of the Mother, is frequently puniſh'd with the untimely death of her Children; or if not with that, tis many times with a ſeverer ſcourge. They live (but as it was foretold

told to *Eli*, 1 *Sam* 2 33.) *to grieve her eies, and to conſume her heart*, to be ruinous to themſelves, and afflictions to their friends, and to force their unhappy mothers to that ſad exclamation, Luke. 23. 29. *Bleſſed are the wombs which bare not.*

30. AND as this proves often true, when the dotage is general upon all the Children, ſo do's it oftner when tis more partial and fix'd upon any one: that Dearling which ſhe makes the only object of her Joy, uſually becomes that of her Sorrow. It is an ordinary infirmity in Parents, to heap all their kindneſs upon one to the defrauding of the reſt, and too many times upon very undue motives: a little excelling in point of Beauty turns the ſcales, when perhaps many more ſolid Excellences are the counterpoiſe. And ſurely this is not only unjuſt but irrational in the Parent: for all peculiarity of favor in a Superior ſhould be diſpens'd either by way of Reward, or Encouragement; and neither of thoſe ends can take place, where tis only the outward form that is conſider'd. For that cannot be rewardable, to which the party has contributed nothing; and the *Pſalmiſt* will tell us, That tis God that hath made us, and not we our ſelves, *Pſalm.* 100. 2. And as little room is there for the other end, that of encouragement. For as our Saviour tells us, *Mat. 6.* none can add a cubit to his ſtature

ſtature, nor make one hair white or black. Tis certain themſelves cannot really do either, tho by the aid of Artificial Hypocriſy they frequently appear to do both. But thoſe are Arts which neither deſerve nor want encouragement: the natural Beauty muſt have its increaſe from the ſame ſource whence it derived its being. There is therefore no reaſonable account to be given, why a Child ſhould be preferr'd for any ſuch exterior excellency.

31. THE only juſtifiable ground of partiality to Children is their Vertue: for to that their own choice concurs, and ſo may intitle them to reward; and tis alſo in their power to advance, and ſo encouragements are not caſt away upon them. Nay, the influences of thoſe may extend farther, and provoke a vertuous emulation in the reſt. But then the mother muſt ſo manag it, as to evidence that tis no inequality in her own inclination, but merely the force of the others deſert; not the Perſon, but the Goodneſs that biaſſes her: and when Vertue is known to be the only ingratiating Quality, they will at once learn the way to become hers and Gods Favorites. And unleſs it be upon this one deſign, tis a very unſafe thing for a Parent to make any partial diſcrimination among Children, which is ſure to temt the more neglected both to repine at her, and

and envy her Dearlings. And often times ſuch ſeeds of rancor have bin by that means ſowed in Children, as have bin hard to eradicate in their riper Years. Nor is the miſchief leſs which ſhe do's to her Fondlings, who beſides that they are expos'd to the malice of the reſt, are uſually ſpoil'd by it, made inſolent and untractable, perhaps their whole lives after: for where the Mothers affection is unbridled, commonly the Childs will is ſo too, her fondneſs ſuperſeding that diſcipline & correction, which ſhould, as the Wiſe man ſpeaks, *bow down its neck from its youth.*

32. AND the like may be ſaid where the indulgence is more univerſal to all the Children, which is in one reſpect worſe then the partial, becauſe it ſpoils more; not one or two, but all the brood. The doting love of a Mother blinds her eies, that ſhe cannot ſee their faults, manacles her hands, that ſhe cannot chaſtiſe them, and ſo their Vices are permitted to grow up with themſelves. As their joints knit and gather ſtrength, ſo do their ill habits, till at laſt they are confirm'd into an Obſtinacy; ſo ſetting them in a perfect oppoſition to that Pattern they ſhould imitate: for as Chriſts child-hood *increaſt in wiſdom*, and the Divine Favor, *Luk.* 2. ſo do theirs in all thoſe provoking follies, which may avert both the love of God and Man. And alas what recompence can the little blandiſh-

diſhments and careſſes of a Mother make her Children, for ſuch important, ſuch ineſtimable miſchiefs? So that ſhe that will be really kind, muſt temper her Indulgence with a prudent ſeverity, or elſe ſhe eminently violates the ſecond rule, by which ſhe ſhould regulate her love, and do's that to her Children, which *Jacob* fear'd from his Father, *Gen* 27. *Brings a curſe upon them, and not a bleſſing.*

33. INDEED the beſt way of approving their Love, is by well diſcharging the other branch of their duty, that of Care. Without this, all the moſt paſſionate raptures of Kindneſs are but an aery Apparition, a fantaſtic Scene, and will no more advantage a Child, then the whole Shambles in Picture can feed and nuriſh it. Now this care is not a temporary, momentary Duty, for ſome one critical inſtant; but is to attend the Child thro the ſeveral ſtages of its Minority, *viz.* Infancy, Childhood, and Youth. The very firſt part of their Infancy, is a ſeaſon only for thoſe Cares which concern their Bodies, providing for their careful Attendance, and all other things conducing to the ſtrengthning their Conſtitutions, and laying a foundation for future Health and Vigor. Which is their intereſt not only upon a Bodily, but upon an Intellectual account, the good temperature of the Body being a great aid towards the free operations of the Mind. And therefore *Socra-*

tes, and other Philoſophers, much recommend to their Diſciples the care of Health, as that which freed the Soul from many incumbrances in its purſuit of Knowledg: and it was the comprehenſive Praier of the Poet, *That the Gods would grant a ſound Mind in a healthful Body.*

34. BUT this Health is not alwaies the conſequent of a very nice and tender Breeding, but is very oft overthrown by it; and if Ladies could but find in their heart to try it, they would, I doubt not, find, that the inuring them to moderate Hardſhips, would much more conduce to the eſtabliſhing and fortifying their Conſtitutions.

35. BEYOND all this, the care for their Exterior is ſoon overtaken by a more important one, that of their Interior, in the timing of which there ſeems to be a very common miſtake in the World. We look upon the ſeven Years of Infancy, as the life merely of an Animal, to be ſpent only in the entertainments of Senſe: and as we uſe not to yoak Calves, or back yong Colts, ſo we think our Children are for a while to be left at the ſame liberty, to have no reſtraint put on any of their paſſions. Nay many times we excite and foment them, teach Children to be angry and envious, proud and ſullen, as if we fear'd their Natural Propenſions to all theſe were too faint, and wanted the help of Inſtitu-

ſtitutions. But ſurely this is a great and pernicious Error; and this ſuppoſing Children to be ſo long Brutes, is the way to make them ſo longer. The Patrons of Atheiſm make it a moſt conſtant Topic in the diſparagement of Religion, that tis owed to the prejudices infuſed in the firſt Infancy: twere to be wiſht, that this Objection might ſo far be complied with, that the fear of God, the love of Virtue, and hatred of Vice, might have the firſt poſſeſſion of the Soul; and they be made to moderate their Paſſions, as ſoon as they are in a capacity to have them excited and engaged.

36. AND truly if we will obſerve it, we may ſee very early dawnings of reaſon in Infants, which would ſooner come to a brightneſs, if we would betimes ſet to the ſcattering of thoſe Paſſions which eclipſe and darken it. A Child will quickly be taught to know what pleaſes or diſpleaſes a Parent, and by a very little taſt of Reward or Puniſhment will learn to do the one, and avoid the other: and when this is don, the Parent has gain'd the fundamental Point, *That of obedience*, and may ſuperſtruct on it what ſhe pleaſes, and then tis her fault if the Child be not by eaſie and inſenſible degrees moulded into a right form. Tis at firſt all one to the Child, whether he name God in an Oath or in his Praiers; but a Mother by Puniſhing the one, and Re-

warding the other, will quickly bring him to know there is a difference; and ſo proportionably in other Inſtances. As to the way of Diſcipline, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, That when there is occaſions for Severity, its better to aw by actual Puniſhment then Terror, and never to make uſe of Infinit and Inviſible Affrightments, the beloved methods of Nurſes and Servants; ſuch as are the menacing of Sprights and Mormo's, and leaving in the dark, that frequently make daſtardly and timerous Impreſſions, which a long Age ſcarcely wears off.

37. A ſober ſenſe of things, is to be impreſſed by treatable means; and this will be don with moſt eaſe, both to the Parent and Child, the ſooner tis ſet upon. The will of a tender infant, is like its Limbs, ſupple and pliant, but time confirms it, and cuſtom hardens it: ſo that tis a cruel Indulgence to the poor Creature, to let it contract ſuch Habits, which muſt coſt him ſo dear the breaking, and dearer if never broken. And if this early care be taken of the Infancy, twill much eaſe the next part, that of the Childhood; for where the ſinew in the neck is broken, where the native Stubbornneſs is ſubdued ſo early, the Yoke will ſit eaſy, all ſucceeding parts of Diſcipline will come with more facility and profit. The care proper to this Age, is, the inſtructing in all parts of uſeful Knowledg,

of

of which as the Divine, for the excellency both of its nature and its end, muſt be firſt ranked, ſo ſhould it be firſt and moſt induſtriouſly cultivated, and by all endearing methods impreſt, not only on the Underſtanding, but the Heart. Piety and Vertue ſhould be propos'd to children as the moſt amiable, as well as neceſſary things, and they ſhould be invited not only to know, but love them.

38. THIS part of Learning is equally competent to both Sexes, and therefore when the Sons are removed from under the Mothers tuition, and ſent to more public places of Erudition, her Province is ſtill the ſame as to her Daughters, to whom ſhe ſhould not only Preach, but exemplify it in her own Practice, no Precepts penetrating ſo much into Youth, as thoſe that are ſo inforc'd. And in order to this, I ſhould commend to Mothers, the being as much with them as they can, and taking the perſonal Inſpection of them; not to turn them off wholly to Servants, no nor yet Governeſſes, but frequently themſelves to examine how they proceed in the Speculative part of Knowledg; and no leſs frequently exhort them to the Practic.

39. MARCUS CATO would not let his Son learn of his Slave, as diſdaining a Child ſhould owe ſo conſiderable a benefit to ſo ſervile a Perſon; and if he thought the mere

teach-

teaching of Grammer too great a charge for ſuch a one, ſurely the whole Inſtitution of Youth is a much greater, it being that on which, not only a few outward Accompliſhments, but even their Eternity depends. The great *Cornelia* Mother of the *Gracchi*, and *Aurelia* the Mother of *Auguſtus*, thought it worth their pains to be a Governeſs. And the truth is, the Soul of a Child is a little too precious a Truſt to commit wholly to the diligence and care of a mercenary Servant. Or if they do happen not to want thoſe Qualifications, yet tis very poſſible they may Prudence, of which there is no ſmall degree requiſite to the Inſtructing of Youth, too great a remiſsneſs or ſeverity being equally deſtructive in that Affair. And indeed beſides theſe immediat, there are ſome other collateral Benefits conſequent to the Mothers performing that Office: twill bring her and her Children into an Intimacy and Converſation, give her an acquaintance with their ſeveral Capacities and Humors; for want of which, many Parents have erred in their Conduct, one ſort of Treatment being not fit for all Children, and the diſtinguiſhing that dependimg wholly on their diſcerning their particular Tempers, which cannot well be don without ſome converſe with them.

40. BESIDES, by this they will be witneſſes how they diſpoſe their Time, that they nei-

neither loſe it by doing nothing, nor yet miſemploy it by doing ill. And indeed there is ſcarce any part of the Parents care more important then this, Idleneſs being no farther removed from Vice, then a Cauſe is from its immediat Effect. Therefore if Children be permitted to trifle away their Time, they will ſoon learn to trifle away their Innocence alſo. So that tis highly neceſſary that they be provided of a ſucceſſion of Emploiments, that by the variety they may be inſenſibly drawn on. Nay methinks, it might very well be contrived that their Recreations might ſomtimes conſiſt of ſuch ingenuous Exerciſes, that they may at once both play and learn.

41. There is yet another good effect of the Mothers preſence with the Children (which is perhaps no leſs material then any of the former:) tis, that by this aſſociating them with her ſelf, ſhe prevents the danger of worſe Society. Children, if the Parents allow them not their company, are neceſſarily caſt upon that of Servants, then which there is ſcarce a greater danger that attends Youth. For beſides that low ſort of converſe debaſes their Minds, makes them mean and ſordid, it often corrupts their Manners too; Children, uſually not receiving more peſtilent Infuſions fron any then ſuch. Servants that deſire to ingratiate themſelves, and have no laudable quality whereby to do it,

it, must first endeavor to ingratiate Vice to them; and then by their officious ministeries in that, have a ready way of introducing themselves into favor. Perhaps, this will be thought to concern only the Masculine part of Children, and that the femal, who are commonly in a distinct Apartment, and converse only with her own Sex, are more secure. But I would not advise Mothers to depend too much on that, for they are no surer that their Daughters shall not converse with Men, nay Men of the meaner sort too, then that their Maids and attendants shall not do so. And when tis consider'd, how apt those are to entertain, if not to invite Amours, tis not very probable the Room where they quarter shall be inaccessable to those they affect. And it were much safer for Children to be in the much public concourse of Men, then to be witnesses and observers of the private Intrigues of such Lovers. The memories of Youth are very tenacious, and if they once be tainted with any indecent thing, will be apt to recollect it. Tis therefore in this respect a very useful part of the Mothers care, to make her self company to her Daughter, to prevent the dangers of a more unequal and infectious Converse.

42. BUT if this be useful in Childhood, tis no less then necessary in the next Period of

of their time; when they arrive near the growth and age of Women. Then indeed the Mother ſhould not only make them her Companions, but her Friends; allow ſuch a kind, yet modeſt Freedom, that they may have a complacence in her Company, and not be temted to ſeek it among their Inferiors: That the belief of her kindneſs may ſupplant the pretenſions of thoſe meaner Sycophants, who by little flatteries endeavor to ſcrew themſelves into their good opinion, and become their Confidents: then which there is nothing more miſchievous; thoſe private Cabals that are held with ſuch, ſerving only to render them mutinous againſt their Parents; theſe Family Incendiaries, like thoſe in the State and Church, ſtill inculcating the one grand Principle of Liberty: a word ſo charming to our depraved Nature, and eſpecially to Youth, that they ſhould not be truſted with ſuch Lectures. Beſides thoſe intimacies are often Introductions to worſe; many ſcandalous Amours and unequal Matches having had their riſe from them. It ſhould therefore be the buſineſs of Mothers to prevent all ſuch pernicious Leagues, by pre-engaging them in more ſafe Familiarities, either with herſelf, or ſome other, of whoſe Vertue ſhe has reaſon to be confident.

43. But the moſt infallible Security againſt this and all other Miſchiefs, is the bring-

ing them into an intimacy and converſation with their Maker, by fixing a true ſenſe of Religion in their Hearts; if that can be effectually don, 'twill ſuperſede all other Expedients. She that duly conſiders ſhe is alwaies in Gods preſence, will want no other Inſpector, nor will ſhe much need Monitors, who attends to the advices of her own Conſcience. Neither will it only tend to the ſecuring her Innocence, but her Reputation too; it being one part of the Chriſtian Law, *to abſtain from all appearance of evil*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 22. *to do things that are of good report*, Phil. 4. 8. ſo that Piety is the one complete armor to defend both their Vertue and Fame. And tis extremely neceſſary they ſhould be furniſht with it, at this Age eſpecially, when they do at firſt enter into the World; which we may well look on as a taking the Field, conſidering how many Aſſaults they are there like to meet with; and if they go without this Armature, they may, none knows how ſoon, be incurably wounded: of which there want not many ſad Inſtances, ſome whereof might probably have bin prevented, had the Parent taken care to have better fortified them.

44. AND indeed tis not a little ſad to ſee how much this their moſt important Concern is neglected. Many Mothers, who are nicely curious in other parts of their Daughters breed-

breeding, are utterly inconsiderate of this. They must have all civil Accomplishments, but no Christian. Those are excluded out of the Scheme of Education, and by that means lie under the prejudice of being not only unnecessary, but ungentile, below the regard of Persons of Quality. Tis much to be fear'd, that this neglect toward their Children, is founded in a previous contemt of Piety in themselves; yet I suppose tis often increas'd by a little Vanity they have of seeing them excel in some of those exterior Qualities, which may recommend them to the humor of the World, upon the improving whereof they are so intent, that more material things are over-lookt. And when those are acquired, the pride of shewing them betraies them to other Inconveniencies. The Mother oft not only permits, but incites the Daughter to the opportunities of boasting her Excellencies, sends her so oft abroad on that Design, that at last perhaps she cannot, when she would, keep her at home, as I believe too many have found experimentally true. In a word, this Interval between Child-hood and Majority, is the most critical Point of a Womans Life, and therefore should be the most nicely and warily attended; and a Mother had need summon not only all her care and diligence, but her prudence too, well to discharge this part of her Obligation.

45. I SHALL not insist more minutely upon Particulars: I have in the former Section spoken somwhat of what tis fit these young Virgins should do and avoid; and whatever by that, or by any more exact rule appears their interest or duty, tis the Mothers to see it be not neglected by them: but where Kindness alone will not prevail, to employ their Autority too, and by a discreet mixture of each, secure their observance by both the tenures of Love and Reverence. Yet I shall a little reflect upon one particular I mention'd before, I mean that of Marrying where they have aversion; which tho I there charg'd as the Crime of the Daughter, yet I must here say the original and more inexcusable guilt is usually in the Parents; who are sometimes such Idolaters to Wealth and Honor, that they sacrifice their Children to them; a more barbarous Immolation then that to *Moloch*. For tho that were very inhuman, yet it had this alleviation, that the pain was short: but a loathed Bed is at once an acute and a lingring Torment, nay, not only so, but a temtation too; so that tis a Tyranny of a most unlimited kind, extends its Effects even to Eternity: and sure that Mother must have very petrified Bowels, have lost all Natural Compassion, that can so impose on her Child.

46. I

46. I ſhall add no more concerning this relation of a Mother, but only one ſhort Advice, That thoſe who groan under the fruſtration of their hopes, whoſe Children by any ſcandalous misbehavior become the Objects of their ſhame and grief, would ſoberly conſider, whether it have not bin ſome way owing to themſelves, either by neglect in their Education, or by their own ill Example. Tis uſually one, and ſomtimes both. They that upon recollection can aſſure themſelves tis neither, may bear the Affliction with much the greater cheerfulneſs; but they that cannot, I am ſure ought to bear it with much the more Patience and Submiſſion, take it as Gods Lecture of Repentance, and look on their Childrens faults as the product of their own. And becauſe Satisfaction is an indiſpenſible part of Repentance, they are with their utmoſt induſtry to endeavor the repairing thoſe Ruins they have made, by recalling thoſe to Virtue, who by their means have ſtraied from it. Tis true, the errors of Education, like a ſubtle Poiſon, do ſo mix with the Blood, ſo incorporate into the Humors and Manners, that 'twill be very difficult to allay their Effects; and therefore the leſſe they are themſelves able to do towards it, the more earneſtly they muſt importune a Higher Power. He who divided the Light from the Darkneſs, can ſeparate the Effects from

from the Cauſes; and as he reſtrained the natural property of Fire, in the Caſe of the three Children, *Dan.* 3. ſo he only can reſcue their Children from that deſtruction to which their negligence has expoſed them. But as to the influence their example has had, they may do ſomthing towards the redreſs of that, by ſetting them a new Copy, making their own change ſo viſible, ſo remarkable, that they may have the very ſame means of reclaming, which there was of ſeducing them. And this is a piece of Juſtice which ſeems to call aloud upon many Mothers. The irregularities of Youth could hardly have grown to the preſent height, had they not received warmth and ſhelter from the practice of their Elders, which do's at once give encouragement and take off reſtraints, the Mother loſing not only her Autority, but her confidence to admoniſh or reprove. With what face can ſhe require that ſtrict and ſevere modeſty of a young Girl, which ſhe who ſhould be a Matron will not practice? or tie up the giddy wandring humor of Youth, within thoſe bounds ſhe thinks too ſtrait for her own? and how ready a retortion will even Scripture it ſelf afford for ſuch an impoſer? *Thou that teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf? Rom. 2. 21.* Let it therefore be the care of all Mothers to live a perpetual Lecture to their Children, ſo to exemplify to them all Vir-

Virtue and Piety, that they may contribute ſomthing to their Spiritual, as well as their Natural Life; that however they may at leaſt deliver their own Souls, and not have their Childrens guilt recoil upon them as the unhappy originals of it.

27. The laſt relation of a Married Woman is that of a Miſtreſs, the inſpection of the Family being uſually her Province; and tho ſhe be not ſupreme there, yet ſhe is to improve her delegated Autority to the advantage of all under it. And her more conſtant reſidence gives her more opportunities of it, then the frequent avocations of the Husband will perhaps allow him. St. *Paul* ſets it as the Calling, and indiſpenſable duty of the Married Women, *That they guide the houſe*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 18. not thinking it a point of Greatneſs to remit the menage of all Domeſtic Concerns to a mercenary Houſe-keeper. And indeed, ſince it has bin a faſhionable thing for a Maſter to reſign up his concerns to the Steward, and the Lady hers to the Governant, it has gon ill with moſt great Families; whilſt theſe Officers ſerve themſelves inſtead of thoſe who employ them, raiſe Fortunes on their Patrons ruines, and divide the ſpoil of the Family; the Houſkeeper pilfering within doors, and the Bailiff plundering without.

48. Now to the well-guiding of the Houſe

House by the Mistress of it, I know no better or more comprehensive rule, then for her to endeavor to make all that are hers, to be Gods Servants also. This will secure her of all those intermedial Qualifications in them, in which her secular Interest is concerned, their own Consciences being the best spy she can set upon them as to their Truth and Fidelity, and the best spur also to Diligence and Industry. But to the making them such, there will need first Instruction, and secondly Discipline. It is a necessary part of the Rulers care to provide that none in their Family should want means of necessary Instruction. I do not say that the Mistress should set up for a Catechist or Preacher; but that they take order they should be taught by those that are qualified for the Employment. And that their furnishing them with Knowledg, may not serve only to help them to a greater number of stripes, *Luke* 12. 47. they are to give them the opportunities of consecrating it by Praier and Devotion; to that end to have publick Divine Offices in the Family; and that not by starts or accidents (when a devouter Guest is to be entertained, and laid by when a profane) but daily and regularly, that the hours of Praiers may be fix'd and constant as those of Meals, and (if it may possibly be) as much frequented; however that towards it she give both Precept and Example.

49. A

49. A Christian Family should be the Epitome of a Church; but alas how many among us lie under a perpetual Interdict: and yet not from the usurpation of any Foreign Power, but from the irreligion of the Domestic? One may go into divers great Families, and, after some stay there, not be able to say that the name of God was mentioned to any other purpose then that of Blasphemy and Execration; nor a Text of Scripture, unless in Burlesque and profane Drollery. And sure we need not wonder at the universal complaint that is now made of ill Servants, when we reflect upon this ill government of Families. They that are suffer'd wholly to forget their duties towards God, will not alwaies remember it towards Man. Servants are not such Philosophers, that upon the bare strength of a few Moral Instincts they will be vertuous: and if by a customary neglect of all things Sacred, they are once taught to look at nothing beyond this World, they will often find temtation enough here to discard their honesty, as the most unthriving Trade. And indeed when the aw of Religion is quite taken off from the vulgar, there will scarce any thing else be found to keep them within any tolerable bounds; so that tis no less impolitic then profane to slacken that Rein.

50. But it is not only the Interest, but the Duty of all that have Families, to keep

up the esteem and practice of Religion in them. Twas one of the greatest Endearments of *Abraham* to God, *That he would command his houshold to keep the way of the Lord*, Gen. 18. 19. And *Joshua* undertakes no less for the Piety of his Houshold then him, *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*, Jos. 24. 15. And sure tis but reasonable, that where we our selves ow an Homage, we should make all our dependants acknowledg the same. Besides, it is a justice in respect of them; for where we entertain a Servant, we take the whole Person into our care and protection, and are false to that undertaking, if we suffer his Soul, the most precious part of him, to perish. And God, who keeps account even of his meanest Creatures, will not patiently resent such a neglect of those who bear his own Image, and were ransomed with as great a price as their Masters were, *for there is no respect of persons with God*, Eph. 6. 9.

51. But when Piety is planted in a Family, 'twill soon wither, if it be not kept in vigor by Discipline: nay, indeed to have Servants seemingly devout in the Oratory, and yet really licentious out of it, is but to convert ones House into a Theater, have a play of Religion, and keep a set of Actors only to personate and represent it. Tis therefore necessary to inquire how they behave themselves when they are off the Stage; whether

ther those hands which they elevate in Praier, are at other times industriously appli'd to work; or those mouths wherewith they there bless God, are not elsewhere filled with Oaths and Curses, Scurrilities and Revilings: in a word, whether that Form of Godliness be not design'd in commutation for Sobriety and Honesty. Indeed the Governors of Families ought to make a strict Inspection into the manners of their Servants, and where they find them good, to affix some special mark of Favor, by which they may both be encouraged to persevere, and others to begin; but where they find them vicious, there as eminently to discountenance, severely to admonish them, and use all fit means for their reclaming, and when that seems hopeless, to dismiss them, that they may not infect the rest. A little *leven* saith the Apostle, *leveneth the whole lump*, Gal. 5. 9. and one ill servant (like a perisht tooth) will be apt to corrupt his fellows. Tis therefore the same in Families that it is in most public Communities, where severity to the ill is mercy and protection to the rest; and were houses thus early weeded of all idle and vicious persons, they would not be so over-grown, nor degenerate into such rude wildernesses, as many (nay I fear most) great Families now are.

52. But as servants are not to be tolerated in the neglect of their duty, so neither are

they to be defeated of any of their dues. Maſters are to give to their ſervants, that which is *juſt and equal*, Col. 4. 1. And ſure tis but juſt and equal that they who are rational creatures ſhould not be treated with the rigor or contemt of brutes: a ſufficient and decent proviſion, both in ſickneſs and in health is a juſt debt to them, beſides an exact performance of thoſe particular contracts upon which they were entertain'd. *Laban* had ſo much of natural juſtice, that he would not take the advantage of *Jacobs* relation to him to make him ſerve him gratis, *Becauſe thou art my brother ſhouldſt thou therefore ſerve me for nought? tell me therefore what ſhall thy wages be? Gen. 29. 15.* But alas now adaies where ſervants have bin told, nay expreſly articled for, their wages, tis with many no eaſy thing to get it: nay tis thought by ſome Maſters an inſolence, a piece of ill manners to demand it; and when they have worn out a ſervnnt, they either pay him not at all, or with the ſame protraction and regret, which they do their Tailors for the old Clothes they have caſt off. I fear there are many inſtances of this, eſpecially among great Perſons; it being a received Mode with too many of them to pay no Debts to thoſe who are too mean to conteſt with them. But however they may ruffle it out with Men, it will one day arraign them before God as moſt injurious Oppreſſors;

there

there being no Crime of that kind more frequently or more ſeverely branded in Scripture, then this of the detention of the Wages of the Servant and Hireling. Beſides, this example of Injuſtice, wherein the Servant is paſſive, is often tranſcrib'd by him in acts of fraud and deceit, and he is apt to think it but an equal retaliation, to break his Truſt where the Maſter breaks his Covenant; and when he once attemts to be his own Pay-maſter, tis not to be doubted but he will allow himſelf large Uſe for the forbearance of his Wages; ſo that the courſe is no leſs unprofitable to the Maſter, then unjuſt and diſhonorable.

53. I am not ſure tis alwaies in the Wives power to prevent this or any of the former faults in the manage of the Family. For her autority being but ſubordinate, if the Husband who is ſupreme ſuſpend her Power, he do's by that vacating her rule, take off the duty conſequent to it; ſo that what I have ſaid, can be obligatory to none that are ſo impeded: but to thoſe who can either do it themſelves, or perſwade their Husbands to it, the omiſſion will be their ſin: all the profaneneſs and diſorder of the Family will be charg'd upon their account, if it came by their default.

54. And this methinks, is a Conſideration that may much mortify one uſual piece of vanity, I mean, that of a multitude of Ser-

Servants. We ſhall all of us find burden enough of our own perſonal miſcarriages, and need not contrive to fetch in more weight from others. And in Families tis generally obſervable, that the bigger they are, the worſe; vice gains boldneſs by numbers, is hatch'd up by the warmth of a full Society; and we daily ſee People venture upon thoſe Enormities in conſort, and in a croud, which they would not dare, did they think they ſtood ſingle. Beſides, the wider the Province is, the more difficult it is well to adminiſter it; and in a heap of Servants many faults will ſcape undiſcern'd: eſpecially conſidering the common Confederacy there is uſually among them, for the eluding of Diſcipline: ſo that what the Wiſe man ſpeaks of not deſiring a multitude of unprofitable Children, I think may be very well appli'd to Servants, whoſe unprofitableneſs uſually increaſes together with their number. I have now run thro the ſeveral Obligations conſequent to the Married State, wherein even upon this very curſory View, there appears ſo many Particulars, that if they were all duly attended, Ladies need not be much at a loſs how to entertain themſelves, nor run abroad in a Romantic Queſt after Foreign Divertiſements, when they have ſuch variety of Engagements at Home.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of Widows.

1. THE next ſtate which can ſucceed to that of Marriage, is Widow-hood, which tho it ſuperſedes thoſe Duties which we terminated merely in the perſon of the Husband, yet it endears thoſe which may be paid to his Aſhes. *Love is ſtrong as death*, Cant. 8. 6. and therefore when it is pure and genuine, cannot be extinguiſh'd by it, but burns like the Funeral-Lamps of old even in Vaults and Charnel-houſes. The conjugal Love tranſplanted into the Grave, (as into a finer Mold) improves into Piety, and laies a kind of ſacred Obligation upon the Widow, to perform all offices of reſpect and kindneſs which his remains are capable of.

2. Now thoſe Remains are of three ſorts, his Body, his Memory, and his Children, The moſt proper expreſſion of her love to the firſt, is in giving it an honorable Enterment; I mean not ſuch as may vie with the *Poland* Extravagance (of which tis obſerved, that two or three near ſucceeding Funerals ruin the Family) but prudently pro-

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portion'd to his Quality and Fortune, ſo that her Zeal to his Corps may not injure a Nobler Relic of him, his Children. And this decency is a much better inſtance of her kindneſs, then all thoſe Tragical Furies wherewith ſome Women ſeem tranſported towards their dead Husbands, thoſe frantic Embraces and careſſes of a Carcaſs, which betray a little too much the ſenſuality of their Love. And it is ſomthing obſervable, that thoſe vehement Paſſions quickly exhauſt themſelves, and by a kind of Sympathetic Efficacy, as the Body (on which their affection was fixt) molders, ſo do's that alſo; nay often it attends not thoſe leſurely degrees of diſſolution, but by a more precipitate motion, ſeems rather to vaniſh then conſume.

3. THE more valuable Kindneſs therefore, is that to his Memory, endevoring to embalm that, keep it from periſhing; and by this innocent Magic (as the Egyptians were wont by a more guilty) ſhe may converſe with the Dead, repreſent him ſo to her own Thoughts, that his Life may ſtill be repeted to her: and as in broken Mirror the refraction multiplies the Images, ſo by his diſſolution every hour preſents diſtinct Idea's of him; ſo that ſhe ſees him the oftner, for his being hid from her Eies. But as they uſe not to embalm without Odors, ſo ſhe is not only

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to preſerve, but perfume his Memory, render it as fragrant as ſhe can, not only to her ſelf, but others; by reviving the remembrance of whatever was Praiſe-worthy in him, vindicating him from all Calumnies and falſe Accuſations, and ſtifling (or allaying) even true ones as much as ſhe can. And indeed a Widow can no way better provide for her own Honor, then by this tenderneſs of her Husbands.

4. YET there is another Expreſſion of it, inferior to none of the former, and that is the ſetting ſuch a value upon her relation to him, as to do nothing unworthy of it. Twas the dying charge of *Auguſtus* to his Wife *Livia*, *Behave thy ſelf well, and remember our Marriage.* And ſhe who has bin Wife to a Perſon of Honor, muſt ſo remember it, as not to do any thing below her ſelf, or which he (could he have forſeen it) ſhould juſtly have bin aſhamed of.

5. THE laſt Tribute ſhe can pay him, is in his Children. Theſe he leaves as his Proxies to receive the kindneſs of which himſelf is uncapable; ſo that the Children of a Widow may clame a double portion of the Mothers love; one upon their Native right, as hers; the other, as a bequeſt in right of their dead Father. And indeed, ſince ſhe is to ſupply the place of both Parents, tis but neceſſary ſhe ſhould put on the Affections of both, and to

the tenderneſs of a Mother, add the care and conduct of a Father. Firſt, in a ſedulous care of their Education: and next, in a prudent managery of their Fortunes; an order that is ſomtimes unhappily inverted, and Mothers are ſo concern'd to have the Eſtate proſper in their tuition, that the Children cannot; whilſt (by an unſeaſonable Frugality) to ſave a little Expence, they deny them the advantages of an Ingenuous and Gentile Breeding: ſwell their Eſtates perhaps to a vaſt Bulk, but ſo contract and narrow their Minds, that they know not how to diſpoſe them to any real benefit of themſelves or others. And this is one of the moſt pernicious Parſimonies imaginable. A Mother by this ſeems to adopt the Fortune, and abdicate the Child, who is only made the Beaſt to bear thoſe loads of Wealth ſhe will lay on, and which ſhe evidently owns as the greateſt Treſure, ſince in tenderneſs to that ſhe neglects him.

6 YET ſomtimes the ſame Effect ſprings from another Cauſe, and Children are ill bred, not becauſe the Mother grūdges the charge, but out of a Feminine fondneſs, which permits her not to part with them to the proper places for their Education. Like *Jacob* to *Benjamin*, her Soul is ſo bound up in them, that ſhe cannot lend them awhile even to their own moſt neceſſary concerns. And this tho not ſo ignoble a motive as the other, is

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of no leſs miſchief, at leaſt to her Sons, who being by it confin'd to home, are conſequently condemn'd to be poiſon'd (if with nothing elſe, yet) with the flatteries of Servants and Tenants, who think thoſe the beſt expedient to ſecure their own ſtation. And with theſe the young Maſter or Landlord is ſo blown up, that as if his Manors were the confines of the World, he can look at nothing beyond them; ſo that when at laſt he breaks looſe from his Mothers arms and comes abroad, he expects ſcarce to find his Equals, much leſs his Betters; thinks he is ſtill to receive the ſame fawning Adorations which he was uſed to at home: and being poſſeſt with this inſolent expectation, he will ſcarce be undeceived, but at the price of many Affronts: nay, perhaps he may buy his experience with the loſs of his life; by his ill manners draw on a Quarrel, wherein he finally periſhes. That this is no impoſſible Suppoſition, ſome unhappy Mothers have found to their unſpeakable affliction.

7. Tis not to be denied, but there are alſo dangers conſequent to the breeding Children abroad, Vice having inſinuated it ſelf even into the places of Erudition, and having not only as many, but the very ſame Academies with Vertue and Learning, ſo that the extreme depravation of the times new ſtates the Queſtion, and we are not to conſider which is beſt, but which is the leaſt ill

diſpoſure of Children. And in that competition ſure the home Education will be caſt; for there they may ſuck in all the Venem, and nothing of the Antidote; they will not only be taught baſe things, but as (I before obſerv'd) by the baſeſt Tutors, ſuch as will add all the moſt ſordid circumſtances to the improving of a Crime. Whereas abroad they are firſt not like to meet with any whoſe intereſt it is ſo much to make them vicious. And ſecondly, they may (as ill as the world is) meet with many who may give them both Precepts and Examples of a better kind. Beſides the Diſcipline uſed in thoſe Communities makes them know themſelves; and the various ſorts of Learning they may acquire, will not only prove uſeful divertiſement (the want of which is the great ſpring of miſchief) but will, if rightly appli'd, furniſh them with Ingenuous and Vertuous Principles, ſuch as may ſet them above all vile and ignoble practices. So that there ſeems a conſpiration of motives to wreſt the child from the reluctating Mother, and to perſwade her for a while to deny her ſelf that deſire of her eies, that ſo he may at laſt anſwer the more rational deſire of her heart.

8. As to the other part of her Obligation, the managing of their Fortune, there is the ſame rule for her as for all other perſons that have a Truſt, *viz.* to do as for themſelves, that

that is, with the ſame care and diligence (if not a greater) as in her own peculiar Concern. I do not ſay that ſhe ſhall confound the property, and make it indeed her own, by applying it to her peculiar uſe, a thing I fear which is often don, eſpecially by the gaier ſort of widows, who to keep up their own Equipage, do ſomtimes incroach upon their ſons peculiar. And I wiſh even that (tho bad enough) were the only caſe wherein it were don: but tis ſomtimes to make her a better prize to a ſecond husband. She goes into another family, and as if ſhe were a Colony ſent out by her ſon, he muſt pay for the planting her there: indeed the oft repeating this injury, has advanc'd it now into a cuſtom, and the management of the Minors eſtate is reckon'd on as part of the widows fortune. But I confeſs I ſee not what there is in the title of a Mother, that can legitimate her defrauding her child; it rather envenems the crime, and adds Unnaturalneſs to Deceit. Beſides tis a prepoſterous ſort of guilt. Orphans and Widows are in Scripture link'd together as objects of Gods and good mens pity, and of ill mens oppreſſion, and how ill alas do's civil war look among fellow ſufferers? The Widow to injure the Orphan is like the uncooth oppreſſion *Solomon* ſpeaks of, *Prov.* 28. 3. *A poor man that oppreſſith the poor is like a ſweeping rain*

rain which leaveth no food. Such kind of rapines are as exceſſive in their degrees, as prodigious in their kind: and I believe there are many inſtances of ſons, who have ſuffer'd more by the Guardianſhip of their Mothers, then they could probably have don by the outrage of ſtrangers.

9. How well ſuch Mothers anſwer their Obligations to their dead Husbands, I muſt leave it to their own Conſciences to diſcuſs, I ſhall only offer them theſe ſteps of gradation by which to proceed. Firſt that Injuſtice of any ſort is a great ſin. Secondly that when tis in a matter of truſt, tis complicated with Treachery alſo. Thirdly that of all truſts thoſe to the dead have alwaies bin eſteem'd the moſt ſacred. If they can find any allay to theſe by the two remaining circumſtances, that tis the truſt of a husband, and the intereſt of a child, I ſhall confeſs them very ſubtil Caſuiſts.

10. I have hitherto ſpoke of what the widow ows to her dead husband; but there is alſo ſomwhat of peculiar Obligation in relation to her ſelf. God who has plac'd us in this World to purſue the intereſts of a better, directs all the ſignal acts of his Providence to that end, and intends we ſhould ſo interpret them. So that every great change that occurs, is deſign'd either to recal us from a wrong way, or to quicken our paces

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in the right; and a widow may more then conjecture, that when God takes away the mate of her boſom, reduces her to a ſolitude, he do's by it found a retreat from the lighter jollities and gaieties of the world. And as in compliance with civil cuſtom ſhe immures her ſelf, ſits in darkneſs for a while; ſo ſhe ſhould put on a more retir'd temper of mind, a more ſtrict and ſevere behavior: and that not to be caſt off with her veil, but to be the conſtant dreſs of her widow-hood. Indeed that State as it requires a great ſobriety and piety, ſo it affords many advantages towards it. The Apoſtle tells us, *that ſhe who is married careth for the things of the World, how ſhe may pleaſe her husband*, 1 Cor. 7. 34. There are many things which are but the due compliances of a Wife, which yet are great avocations, and interruptions of a ſtrict Devotion; when ſhe is manumitted from that ſubjection, when ſhe has leſs of *Martha's care of ſerving*, ſhe is then at liberty to chuſe *Mary's part*, Luk. 10. 42. She has her time and her fortune at her own command, and conſequently may much more abound in the works both of Piety and Charity. We find God himſelf retrench'd the wives power of binding her own ſoul, *Num.* 30. Her vows were totally inſignificant without her husbands confirmation; but the widow might devote her ſelf to what degree ſhe

ſhe pleas'd: her Piety has no reſtraint from any other inconſiſtent obligation, but may ſwell as high as it can. Thoſe hours which were before her husbands right, ſeem now to devolve on God the grand proprietor of our time: that diſcourſe and free converſe wherewith ſhe entertain'd him, ſhe may now convert into colloquies and ſpiritual entercourſe with her maker; and that love which was only human before, by the change of its object acquires a ſublimity, is exalted into divine: from loial duty and conjugal affection becomes the eternal works and happineſs of Angels, the ardor of a Cherubim. Thus may ſhe in a higher ſenſe verify *Sampſons* riddle, *Jud.* 14. 14. *fetch hony out of a carcaſs*, make her husbands Ashes (like thoſe of the heifer under the law, *Heb.* 9. 13.) *her Purification*: his corruption, may help to put on incorruption, and her loſs of a temporary comfort may inſtate her in an eternal.

11. And as her ſelf, ſo her fortune may alſo be conſecrated: and indeed if she be, that will alſo. if she have made an eſcape out of *Egypt* there shall not a hoof be left behind her, *Exod.* 10. 26. no part of her poſſeſſions will be aſſign'd to vanity and exceſs. She who hath really devoted her ſelf to Piety, *faſted and praied* with *Anna* Luk 2. 27. will alſo be *full of good words and alms-deeds* with *Tabitha*, Acts 9. 36. Thus she may be

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a mother when ſhe ceaſes to bear; and tho ſhe no more encreaſe one Family, ſhe may ſupport many. And certainly the fertility of the womb, is not ſo valuable as this of the bowels: Fruitfulneſs can be but a happineſs, Compaſſion is a vertue. Nay indeed tis a greater and more certain happineſs: a child is not brought forth but with pangs and anguiſh, but a work of Mercy is produc'd not only with eaſe, but delight. Beſides, ſhe that bears a Child, knows not whether it may prove a Bleſſing or a Curſe; but Charity gives certain title to a Bleſſing, and engages the moſt ſolvent Pay-maſter, even God himſelf, who owns all ſuch diſburſments as a loan to him. *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord: and that which he hath given, will he pay him again*, Prov. 19. 17.

12. THERE was in the Primitive times an Eccleſiaſtical Order of Widows, which St. *Paul* mentions, 1 *Tim.* 5. whoſe whole Miniſtry was devoted to Charity. They were indeed of the poorer ſort, fit rather to receive then give Alms; yet the leſs they could do with their Purſes, the more was required of their Perſons, the humbler offices of *waſhing the Saints feet*, the careful task of *bringing up children*, and a diligent *attendance on every good work*. And ſure there is parity of Reaſon, that thoſe who upon the ſcore of their Wealth, exemt themſelves from thoſe Labori-

ous Services, ſhould commute for it by more Liberal Alms. In the warmth and zeal of Chriſtianity, Women of the higheſt Quality performed both ſorts of Charity, forgot their Greatneſs in their condeſcenſions, yet aſſum'd it again in their Bounty; founded Hoſpitals, and yet with a *labor of love*, as the Apoſtle ſtyles it, *Heb.* 6. 10. diſdain'd not ſomtimes to ſerve in them. But theſe are Examples not like to be tranſcrib'd in our daies, Greatneſs is now grown to ſuch an unweildineſs that it cannot ſtoop tho to the moſt Chriſtian Offices, and yet can as little ſoar up in any Munificent Charities: it ſtands like *Nebuchadnezzars* Golden Image, a vaſt bulk only to be ador'd.

13. Now certainly, if any Women be qualified to avert this reproch, it muſt be the Dowagers of great Families and Fortunes: they have none to controul their Viſits to the ſick and afflicted, or to reſent a diſparagement from their Humility, neither have they an account to give of their Poſſeſſions to any but God and themſelves; to him ſure they can bring none ſo like to procure them the Eulogy of *well don thou good and faithful ſervant*, Matth. 25. 21. as a Catalogue of their Alms. Nor indeed can they any other way diſpoſe their Fortune ſo much to their own contentment; they may poſſibly cloy and ſatiate their ſenſes, make proviſion for the fleſh; but that

that no way ſatisfies their reaſon, much leſs their Conſcience. The Soul, which is the ſuperior part, is quite left out in that diſtribution; nothing is communicated to it but the guilt of thoſe dear bought Exceſſes. The only way it has to be a ſharer in their Wealth, is by a charitable diſpenſing. The poor are its Proxies as well as Gods, and tho in all other reſpects we may ſay to the Soul, as the *Pſalmiſt* do's to God, *Pſal.* 16. 2. *my goods extend not to thee:* yet by this way, it becomes not only a partaker, but the chief proprietor, and all is laid out for its uſe. The harboring an out-caſt, builds it *an everlaſting habitation*, *Luk.* 16. 9. the clothing the naked, arrays it in *pure white linen*, Rev. 19. 8. and the feeding the hungry, makes it a gueſt *at the ſupper of the Lamb*, v. 8. Nay, it gains not only an indefeiſible title to theſe happy Reverſions, but it has a great deal in preſent poſſeſſion, a huge rational Complacence in the right applying of Wealth, and doing that with it for which twas deſign'd. Yet more, it gives a ſenſitive delight, nothing being more agreeable to human nature, then the doing good to its own kind. A ſeaſonable Alms leaves a greater exultation and tranſport in the Giver, then it can ordinarily raiſe in the Receiver; ſo exemplifying the Maxim of our Bleſſed Lord, that it is a *more bleſſed thing to give then to receive*, Act. 20. 35. This indeed is a way

to elude the ſevere denunciation of the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. *A widow that liveth in this pleſure, is* not *dead whileſt ſhe liveth*, but on the contrary, ſhall live when ſhe dies; when ſhe reſigns her Breath, ſhall improve her being: the Praiers of the Poor, like a benign gale, ſhall aſſiſt her flight to the Region of Bliſs; and ſhe who has here cheriſh'd the afflicted Members, ſhall there be indiſſolubly united to their Glorious Head.

15. AND now methinks Widow-hood, under this aſpect, is quite transform'd, is not ſo forlorn, ſo deſolate an eſtate as tis uſually eſteem'd. And would all Widows uſe but this expedient, thus devote themſelves to Piety and Charity, it would, like the healing Tree, *Exod.* 15. 25. ſweeten theſe Waters of *Marah*, render the condition not only ſupportable, but pleſant; and they would not need to make ſuch affrighted, ſuch diſadvantageous eſcapes, as many do, from it. Tis true, the Apoſtles affirmation is unqueſtionable, that *the wife, when her husband is dead, is at liberty to be married to whom ſhe will*, 1 Cor. 7. 39. But the advice he ſubjoins is authentic too, *ſhe is happier if ſhe ſo abide.* She that may ſolace her ſelf in the Society, in the Love of her God, makes an ignoble, deſcent to human Embraces; she that may purchaſe Heaven with her Wealth, buys a very dear Bargain of the beſt Husband on Earth.

Earth. Nay indeed, upon a meer ſecular account, it ſeems not very prudent to relinquish both Liberty and Property, to eſpouſe at the beſt a Subjection, but perhaps a Slavery: it a little reſembles the mad Frollicks of freed Gally-ſlaves, who play away their Liberty as ſoon as they regain it.

15. MARRIAGE is ſo great an adventure, that once ſeems enough for the whole life: for whether they have bin proſperous or adverſe in the firſt, it do's almoſt diſcourage a ſecond attemt. She that has had a good Husband, may be ſuppos'd to have his Idea ſo fixt in her Heart, that it will be hard to introduce any new Form: nay farther, she may very reaſonably doubt, that in this common dearth of Vertue, two good Husbands will ſcarce fall to one Womans share, and one will become more intolerable to her, by the reflections she will be apt to make on the better. On the other ſide, if she have had a bad, the ſmart ſure cannot but remain after the rod is taken off; the memory of what she has ſuffer'd should methinks, be a competent caution againſt new adventures. Yet experience ſhews us that women (tho the weaker ſex) have commonly fortitude enough to encounter and baffle all theſe conſiderations. It is not therefore to be expected that many will by any thing that hath or can be ſaid be diverted from remarrying: and

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indeed ſhe that do's not preſerve her Widowhood upon the accounts fore-mentioned, may perhaps better relinquiſh it. St. *Paul* we ſee adviſes that thoſe *Widows* who found no better employment *then going from houſe to houſe*, that grew by their vacancy to *be tatlers and buſy bodies*, 1 Tim. 5. 13. ſhould marry again, it being the beſt way to fix theſe wandring planets, to find them buſineſs of their own at home, that ſo they may not ramble abroad to intermedle with that of others. And the truth is, they that cannot brook the retiredneſs and gravity which becomes a Widow, had better put themſelves in a ſtate that leſs requires it; and if they reſolve not to conform their minds to their condition, to bring their condition to their minds. But in the doing that there will be ſome cautions very neceſſary to be obſerv'd. I ſhall reduce them to two, the one relating to the time, the other to the equality of the match.

16. FIRST in reſpect of time, common decency requires that there be a conſiderable interval between the parting with one husband and the chuſing another. This has bin ſo much obſerved by nations that were at all civiliz'd, that we find *Numa* made it a law, that no widow ſhould marry under ten months, and if any did ſhe was to ſacrifice as for the expiation of a crime. And this continued in force many Ages after, inſo-

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much that when upon reaſons of State *Auguſtus* found it uſeful to marry his ſiſter *Octavia* to *Antonius*, nothing leſs then a decree of the Senate could licenſe the anticipating the time; ſo jealous obſervers were they of this point of Civility, that they thought the whole State was concern'd in the violation. Tis true we have no law in the caſe, but we have ſomwhat of cuſtom, I know not how long we ſhall have, ſince the frequent breaches of it threaten quite to cancel it: yet a woman that is tender of her honor will ſcarce give her example towards the reſcinding it. The wounds of grief are ſeldom heal'd by any hand but that of time, and therefore too ſudden a cure ſhews the hurt pierc'd not deep; and ſhe that can make her mourning veil an optic to draw a new lover nearer to her ſight, gives cauſe to ſuſpect the ſables were all without.

17. The next thing conſiderable is the equality of the match. Marriage is ſo cloſe a link, that to have it eaſy tis good to have the parties as even proportion'd as may be. And firſt in reſpect of quality and fortune; tis to be wiſht there ſhould be no eminent diſproportion. Thoſe that meet moſt upon a level, are leaſt ſubject to thoſe upbraidings that often attend a great deſcent of either party. It is therefore no prudent motive, by which ſome Widows are ſwai'd who mar-

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ry only for a great Title; who often do not meet with ſo much of obeiſance from ſtrangers, as they do with contemt from their husband and his relations. There have bin examples of Lords, who have ſued rich, but inferior widows like ſpunges, ſqueez'd them to fill themſelves with their wealth, and them only with the air of a big name. On the other ſide for a woman to marry very meanly and too much below her ſelf, is rather worſe; thoſe kind of matches are ordinarily made in a tranſport of paſſion, and when that abates and leaves her to ſober reflections, she will probably be ſo angry with her ſelf, that she will ſcarce be well pleas'd with her husband. A ſtate of ſubjection is a little ſweetned by the worth and dignity of the ruler: for as it is more honorable, ſo tis alſo more eaſy, the ſerviler ſpirits being of all others the moſt imperious in command. And ſure 'twill not a little grate a woman of honor, to think she has made ſuch a one her Maſter, who perhaps would before have thought it a preferment to have bin her ſervant. Nay farther, ſuch marriages have commonly an ill reflection on the Modeſty of the Woman, it being uſually preſum'd that where the diſtance was ſo great, as to diſcourage ſuch an attemt on his part, there was ſome invitation on hers. So that upon all accounts she is very forlorn who thus diſpoſes of her ſelf,

ſelf. Yet tis too well known ſuch matches have oft bin made, and the ſame levity and inconſideration may betray others to it; and therefore tis their concern well to ballaſt their minds, and to provide that their Paſſion never get the aſcendant over their Reaſon.

18. ANOTHER very neceſſary equality is that of their judgment as to Religion. I do not mean that they are to catechize each other, as to every minute ſpeculative point: but that they be of the ſame profeſſion, ſo as to join together in the worſhip of God. It is ſure very uncomfortable that thoſe who have ſo cloſely combin'd all their other intereſts, ſhould be diſunited in the greateſt; that one Church cannot hold them, whom one houſe, one bed do's; and that Religion which is in it ſelf the moſt uniting thing, ſhould be the only diſagreement between them. I know tis oft made a compact in ſuch matches, that neither ſhall impoſe their opinion upon the other: yet I doubt tis ſeldom kept, unleſs it be by thoſe whoſe careleſneſs of all Religion abates their zeal to any one. But where they have any earneſtneſs in their way, eſpecially where one party thinks the other in a damnable error, twill ſcarce be poſſible to refrain endeavoring to reduce them; and that endeavor begets diſputes, thoſe diſputes heats, thoſe heats diſguſts, and thoſe diſguſts perhaps end in averſion; ſo that at laſt their affections grow

as unreconciliable as their opinions, and their religious jars draw on domeſtic. Beſides if none of theſe perſonal debates happen, yet the education of the children will be matter of diſpute; the one parent will ſtill be countermining the other, each ſeeking to recover the others proſelytes. Nay it introduces faction into the inferior parts of the family too: the ſervants according to their different perſwaſions bandy into leagues and parties; ſo that it endangers, if not utterly deſtroies all concord in families: and all this train of miſchiefs ſhould methinks be a competent prejudice againſt ſuch matches.

19. THERE is yet a third particular wherein any great diſproportion is much to be avoided, and that is in Years. The humors of youth and age differ ſo widely, that there had need be a great deal of skill to compoſe the diſcord into a harmony. When a young Woman marries an old man, there are commonly jealouſies on the one part, and loathings on the other, and if there be not an eminent degree of diſcretion in one or both, there will be perpetual diſagreements. But this is a caſe that do's not often happen among thoſe I now ſpeak to: for tho the avarice of Parents ſomtimes forces maids upon ſuch matches, yet Widows who are their own chuſers ſeldom make ſuch elections. The inequality among them commonly falls on the other ſide, and old

old women marry young men. Indeed any marriage is in ſuch, a folly and dotage. They who muſt ſuddenly make their beds in the duſt, what ſhould they think of a nuptial couch? And to ſuch the anſwer of the Philoſopher is appoſite, who being demanded what was the fitteſt time for marrying, replied, for the young not yet, for the old not at all.

20. But this dotage becomes perfect frenzy and madneſs when they chuſe young husbands: this is an accumulation of abſurdities and contradictions. The Husband and the Wife are but one perſon; and yet at once young and old, freſh and wither'd. Tis a reverſing the decrees of nature: and therefore twas no ill anſwer which *Dionyſius* the Tyrant gave his mother, who in her age deſign'd ſuch a match, that tho by his regal power he could diſpenſe with poſitive laws, yet he could not abrogate thoſe of nature, or make it fit for her an old woman to marry a young man. Tis indeed an inverſion of ſeaſons, a confounding the Kalender, making a mongrel month of *May* and *December*: and the conjunction proves as fatal as it is prodigious; it being ſcarce ever ſeen that ſuch a match proves tolerably happy. And indeed tis not imaginable how it ſhould; for firſt tis to be preſum'd that ſhe that marries ſo muſt marry meanly. No young man who do's not need

her fortune will take her perſon. For tho ſome have the humor to give great rates for inanimate Antiquities, yet none will take the living *gratis*. Next ſhe never miſſes to be hated by him ſhe marries: he looks on her as his rack and torment, thinks himſelf under the lingring torture devis'd by *Mezentius*, a living body tied to a dead. Nor muſt ſhe think to cure this by any the little adulteries of Art: ſhe may buy beauty, and yet can never make it her own; may paint, yet never be fair. Tis like enameling a mud wall, the courſneſs of the ground will ſpoil the varniſh; and the greateſt exquiſitneſs of dreſs ſerves but to illuſtrate her native blemiſhes. So that all ſhe gains by this is to make him ſcorn as well as abhor her.

21. INDEED there is nothing can be more ridiculous, then an old Woman gaily ſet out; and it was not unaptly ſaid of *Diogenes* to ſuch a one, If this decking be for the living, you are deceived; if for the dead make haſt to them: and I doubt many young husbands will be ready to ſay as much. Nay becauſe death comes not quick enough to part them, there are few have patience to attend its loitering pace: the man bids adieu to the wife tho not to her fortune, takes that to maintain his luxuries elſe-where, allows her ſome little annuity, and makes her a penſioner to her own eſtate. So that he has his deſign, but ſhe

ſhe none of hers: he married for her fortune, and he has it; ſhe for his perſon, and has it not: and which is worſe, buies her defeat with the loſs of all, he commonly leaving her as emty of mony as he found her of wit.

22. And truly this is a condition deplorable enough, and yet uſually fails even of that comfort which is the laſt reſerve of the miſerable, I mean Pity. Tis the Wiſe mans queſtion, *Eccleſ.* 12. 13. *Who will pity a charmer that is bitten with a Serpent?* He might have preſum'd leſs on his skill, and kept himſelf at a ſafer diſtance: and ſure the like may be ſaid of her. Alas what are her feeble charms, that ſhe ſhould expect by them to fix the giddy appetites of youth? And ſince she could ſo preſume without ſenſe, none will regret that she should be convinc'd by ſmart. Beſides, this is a caſe wherein there have bin a multitude of unhappy Preſidents which might have caution'd her. He that accidentally falls down an undiſcover'd precipice is compaſſionated for his diſaſter; but he that ſtands a great while on the brink of it, looks down and ſees the bottom ſtrew'd with the mangled carcaſſes of many that have thence fallen; if he shall deliberately caſt himſelf into their company, the blame quite extinguiſhes the pity; he may aſtoniſh, but not melt the beholders. And truly she who caſts herſelf away in ſuch a match, betraies not

not leſs, but more wilfulneſs. How many ruins of unhappy women preſent themſelves to her, like the racks of old veſſels, all ſplit upon this rock? And if ſhe will needs ſteer her courſe purpoſely to the ſame, none ought to grudg her the ſhipwrack ſhe ſo courts.

23. NOR has ſhe only this negative diſcomfort, to be depriv'd of pity, but ſhe is loaded with cenſures and reproch. The World is apt enough to malicious errors, to fix blame where there is none, but tis ſeldom guilty of the charitative, do's not overlook the ſmalleſt appearance of evil, but generally puts the worſt conſtruction on any act, that it will with any probability bear; and according to that meſure women in this condition can expect no very mild deſcants on them. Indeed ſuch matches are ſo deſtitute of any rational Plea, that tis hard to derive them from any other motive then the ſenſitive. What the common conjectures are in that caſe, is as needleſs as it is unhandſom to declare: I will not ſay how true they are; but if they be, it adds another reaſon to the former, why ſuch Marriages are ſo improſperous. All diſtortions in Nature are uſually ominous; and ſure ſuch preternatural heats in Age, may very well be reckon'd as diſmal Preſages, and very certain ones too, ſince they create the ruine they fore-tell. And truly tis not only juſt, but

but convenient, that ſuch Motives ſhould be attended with ſuch Conſequences; that the Bitterneſs of the one, may occaſion ſome reflexion on the Sordidneſs of the other. Tis but kindly, that ſuch an Alhallontide Spring ſhould meet with froſts, and the unpleſantneſs of the Event chaſtiſe the uglineſs of the Deſign; and therefore I think thoſe that are conſcious of the one, ſhould be ſo far from murmuring, that they ſhould be very thankful for the other, think it Gods diſcipline to bring them again to their Wits; and not repine at that ſmart which themſelves have made neceſſary.

24. And now I wish all the Ancienter Widows, could ſeriouſly weigh how much tis their Intereſt not to ſever thoſe two Epithets; that of Ancient they cannot put off, it daily grows upon them; and that of Widow is ſure a more proportionable adjunct to it, then that of Wife; eſpecially when it is to one to whom her Age might have made her Mother. There is a Veneration due to Age, if it be ſuch as diſowns not it ſelf, *The hoary head*, ſaies *Solomon, is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteouſneſs*, Prov. 16. 32. but when it will mix it ſelf with Youth, it is diſclaim'd by both, becomes the ſhame of the Old, and the ſcorn of the Young. What a ſtrange fury is it then which poſſeſſes ſuch women, that when they may diſpoſe their Fortunes

tunes to those Advantageous Designs before mention'd, they should only buy with them, so undecent, so ridiculous a slavery? that when they may keep up the reputation of Modesty and Prudence, they should expose themselves to an Universal Contemt for the want of both? and that they who might have had a Reverence, put themselves even out of the capacity of bare Compassion?

25. THIS is so high a Frenzy, as sure cannot happen in an instant; it must have some preparatory degrees, some rooting in the constitution and habit of the mind. Such Widows have sure some lightness of humor, before they can be so giddy in their Brains, and therefore those that will secure themselves from the Effect, must substract the Cause; if they will still be wishing themselves young, tis odds but within a while they will perswade themselves they are so. Let them therefore content themselves to be old, and as Fashions are varied with Times, so let them put on the Ornaments proper to their Season, which are Piety, Gravity, and Prudence. These will not only be their Ornament, but their Armor too; this will gain them such a Reverence, that will make it as improbable they should be assaulted, as impossible they should assault. For I think one may safely say, it is the want of one or all of those, which betraies Women to such Marriages.

26. AND

26. AND indeed it may be a matter of Caution, even to the younger Widows, not to let themſelves too much looſe to a light frolic Humor, which perhaps they will not be able to put off, when it is moſt neceſſary they ſhould. It will not much invite a ſober Man to marry them while they are young; and if it continue with them till they are old, it may (as Natural Motions uſe) grow more violent towards its end: precipitate them into that ruinous Folly we have before conſider'd. Yet, ſhould they happen to ſcape that, ſhould it not force them from their Widow-hood, it will ſure very ill agree with it: for how prepoſterous is it for an old Woman to delight in Gauds and Trifles, ſuch as were fitter to entertain her Grand-children? to read Romances with ſpectacles, and be at Masks and Dancings, when ſhe is fit only to act the Antics? Theſe are contradictions to Nature, the tearing off her Marks, and where ſhe has writ fifty or ſixty, to leſſen (beyond the proportion of the unjuſt Steward) and write ſixteen. And thoſe who thus manage their Widow-hood, have more reaſon to bewail it at laſt then at firſt, as having more experimentally found the miſchief of being left to their own Guidance. It will therefore concern them all to put themſelves under a ſafer Conduct, by an aſſiduous Devotion to render themſelves up to the leading of the one infallible Guide,

who if he be not a *covering of the eies*, Gen. 20. 16. to preclude all second Choices, may yet be *a light to them* for discerning who are fit to be chosen; that if they see fit to use their liberty and Marry, they may yet take the Apostles restriction with it, 1 *Cor.* 7. 40. that *it be only in the Lord*, upon such sober Motives, and with such due Circumstances as may approve it to Him, and render it capable of his Benediction.

The Close.

1. I HAVE now gon thro both Parts of the propos'd Method. The former has presented those Qualifications which are equally necessary to every Woman. These, as a Root, send sap and vigour to the distinct Branches, animate and impregnate the several successive States thro which she is to pass. He that hath pure Ore or Bullion, may cast it into what Form best fits his use, nay may translate it from one to another; and she who has that Mine of Virtues, may furnish out any Condition; her being good in an absolute consideration, will certainly make her so in a relative. On the other side, she who has not such a Stock, cannot keep up the Honor of any State; like corrupted Liquor, emty it

it from one Veſſel to another, it ſtill infects and contaminates all. And this is the cauſe that Women are alike complain'd of under all Forms, becauſe ſo many want this Fundamental Vertue. Were there more good Women, there would be more modeſt Virgins, loial and obedient Wives, and ſober Widows.

2. I Must therefore intreat thoſe who will look on this Tract, not only to ſingle out that part which bears their own Inſcription, but that they think themſelves no leſs concern'd in that which relates indefinitely to their Sex; endeavor to poſſeſs themſelves of thoſe Excellencies, which ſhould be as univerſal as their Kind: and when they are ſo ſtor'd with Matter, they may leave Providence to diverſifie the Shape, and to aſſign them their Scene of Action.

3. And now, would God it were as eaſie to perſwade, as it is to propoſe; and that this Diſcourſe may not be taken only as a Gazet for its newneſs, and diſcarded as ſoon as read; but that it may at leaſt advance to the honor of an Almanac, be allowed one Year ere it be out of date: and in that time, if frequently and ſeriouſly conſulted, it may perhaps awaken ſome Ladies from their ſtupid Dreams, convince them that they were ſent into the World for nobler purpoſes, then only to make a little Glittering in it; like a Comet,

to give a blaze, and then diſappear. And truly, if it may operate but ſo far as to give them an effective ſenſe of that, I ſhall think it has don them a conſiderable Service. They may, I am ſure from that Principle, deduce all neceſſary Conſequences, and I wiſh they would but take the pains to draw the Corollaries; for thoſe Inductions they make to themſelves, would be much more efficacious then thoſe which are drawn to their hands. Propriety is a great endearment: we love to be Proſelytes to our ſelves; and People oft reſiſt others Reaſons, who would upon mere partiality pay reverence to their own.

4. BUT beſides this, there would be another Advantage, if they could be but got to a cuſtom of conſidering, by it they might inſenſibly undermine the grand Inſtrument of their ruine. That careleſs incogitancy, ſo remarkably frequent among all, and not leaſt among Perſons of Quality, is the ſource of innumerable Miſchiefs; tis the *Delilah*, that at once lulls and betraies them; it keeps them in a perpetual Sleep, binds up their Faculties, ſo that, tho they are not extinct, yet they become uſeleſs. *Plato* uſed to ſay, *That a man aſleep was good for nothing:* and tis certainly no leſs true of this Moral drouſineſs then the Natural. And as in Sleep the fancy only is in motion, ſo theſe inconſiderate Perſons do rather dream then diſcourſe

course, entertain little trifling Images of things which are presented by their Sense, but know not how to converse with their Reason. So that in this drousy state, all temtations come on them with the same advantage, with that of a *thief in the night*; a Phrase by which the Scripture expresses the most inevitable unforeseen danger, 1 *Thess.* 5. 2. We read in *Judges*, how easily *Laish* become a prey to a handful of Men, merely because of this supine negligent humor of the Inhabitants, which had cut them off from all intercourse with any who might have succor'd them, *Jud.* 18. 25. 28. and certainly it gives no less opportunity to our spiritual Assailants, leaves us naked and unguarded to receive all their Impressions. How prodigious a thing is it then, that this state of dulness and danger should be affectedly chosen? yet we see it too often is; even by those whose Qualities and Education fit them for more Ingenuous Elections; nay, which is yet more riddle, that very aptness disenables, sets them above what it prepares them for. Labor is lookt on as utterly incompatible with Greatness, and consideration is lookt on as a labor of the mind; and there are some Ladies who seem to reckon it as their Prerogative, to be exemted from both; will no more apply their Understandings to any serious Discussion, then their Hands to the

Spin-

Spindle and Diſtaff; the one they think pedantic, as the other is mean. In the mean time, by what ſtrange meſures do they proceed? they look on Idiots as the moſt deplorable of Creatures, becauſe they want reaſon; and yet make it their own excellence and preheminence, to want the uſe of it; which is indeed ſo much worſe then to want the thing, as ſloth is worſe then poverty, a moral defect then a natural. But we may ſee by this, how much civil and ſacred Eſtimates differ: for we find the *Bereans* commended, not only as more diligent, but as more noble too, *Acts* 17. 11. becauſe they attentively *conſider'd* and ſtrictly examin'd the *Doctrine preach'd to them.* By which they may diſcern, that in Gods Court of Honor, a ſtupid Oſcitancy is no ennobling Quality, however it comes to be thought ſo in theirs.

5 AND if this one point might be gain'd, if they would but ſo far actuate their Reaſon, as deliberately and duly to weigh their Intereſt, they would find that ſo ſtrictly engaging them to all that is Vertuous, that they muſt have a very invincible reſolution for ruine, if that cannot perſwade them. And I hope all women are not *Medea's*, whom the Poet brings avowing the horridneſs of that fact, which yet ſhe reſolv'd to execute. They are generally rather timorous, and apt to ſtart at the apprehenſion of danger; let them but ſee a ſer-

a serpent tho at a great distance, they will need no homilies or lectures to be perswaded to fly it. And sure did they but clearly discern what a sting there is in those vicious follies they embrace, their fear would make them quit their hold, put them in such a trembling, as would like that of *Belshazzars*, slacken their joints, and make those things drop from them, which before they most tenaciously grasped. For indeed in sin there is a conspiration of all that can be dreadful to a rational being, so that one may give its compendium by the very reverse of that which the Apostle gives of Godliness, 1 Tim 4 8. for as the one *has the promises*, so the other has the curses *of this life, and of that to come.*

6. In this life every deprav'd act (much more habit) has a black shadow attending it: it casts one inward upon the conscience in uncomfortable upbraidings and regrets. Tis true indeed some have the art to disguise that to themselves by casting a yet darker over it, suppressing all those reluctings by an industrious stupefaction, making their souls so perfect night, that they cannot see those black images their Conscience represent. But as this renders their condition but the more wretched, so neither can they blind others tho they do themselves. Vice casts a dark shadow outwards too, not such as may conceal but betray its self: and as the evening she-

ſhadows increaſe in dimenſion, grow to a monſtroſity and diſproportion, ſo the longer any ill habit is continued, the more viſible, the more deform'd it appears, draws more obſervation and more cenſure.

7. TWERE indeed endleſs to reckon up the temporal evils to which it expoſes its votaries. Immodeſty deſtroies their fame, a vaine Prodigality their fortune, Anger makes them mad, Pride hateful, Levity renders them deſpis'd, Obſtinacy deſperate, and Irreligion is a complication of all theſe, fills up their meſure both of guilt and wretchedneſs. So that had vertue no other advocate, her very Antagoniſt would plead for her: the miſerable conſequences of vice, would like the flames of *Sodom*, ſend all conſidering perſons to that little *Zoar*, which how deſpicable ſoever it may have appear'd before, cannot but look invitingly when ſafety is inſcrib'd on its gates.

8. BUT it muſt infinitly more do ſo if they pleaſe to open a viſto into the other World, make uſe of divine perſpectives to diſcern thoſe diſtant objects which their groſſer ſenſes do here intercept. There they may ſee the diſmal Cataſtrophe of their Comedies, the miſerable inverſion of all unlawful or unbounded pleſures: there that Prophetic menace concerning *Babylon* which we find, *Rev.* 18. 7. will be literally verified upon

on every unhappy soul, *According as she exalted her self and lived delicatly, so much the more tribulation give her*; the torment of that life will bear proportion to the pride and luxuries of this. It will therefore be necessary for those who here wallow in pleasures, to confront to them the remembrance of those rivers of Brimstone, and ask themselves the Prophets question, *who can dwell with everlasting burnings?* We find *Esay*, when he denounces but temporal judgments against the daughters of *Zion*, exactly pursues the Antithesis, and to every part of their effeminate delicacy he opposes the direct contrary hardship, instead of *sweet smells, there shall be a stink, instead of a girdle, a rent, instead of well-set hair, baldness, instead of a stomacher, a girding with sackcloth, and burning instead of beauty*, Esay 3. 24.

9. If were well the daughters of our *Zion* would copy out this lecture, and prudently fore-see how every particular sin or vanity of theirs will have its adapted punishment in another World. And sure this consideration well digested, must needs be a forcible expedient to cleanse them from all *filthiness of flesh and spirit*, as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. 7. 1. For is it possible for her to cherish and blow up her libidinous flames here, who considers them but as the first kindlings of those inextinguishable ones hereafter? Can she make it her study to please her appetite, that remem-

bers that *Dives*'s unintermitted feaſt ends in as unallaied a thirſt? Or can ſhe deny the crumbs of her table to that *Lazarus*, to whom ſhe fore-ſees ſhe ſhall then ſupplicate for a drop of water? In fine can she lay out her whole induſtry, her fortune, nay her ingenuity too, in making proviſion for the flesh, who conſiders that that flesh will more corrupt by pampering, and breed the worm that never dies? Certainly no woman can be ſo deſperately daring, as thus to attaque damnation, reſiſt her reaſon and her ſenſe, only that she may ruine her ſoul; and unleſs she can do all this, her fore-ſight will prove her eſcape, and her viewing the bottomleſs pit in Landskip and picture, will ſecure her from a real deſcent into it.

10. But now that this Tract may not make its *exit* in the shape of a Fury, bring the meditations to hell and there leave them, it muſt now at laſt ſhift the Scene, and as it has shew'd the blackneſs of vice by that outer darkneſs to which it leads, we alſo will let in a beam of the Celeſtial light to diſcover the beauty of Vertue; remind the Reader that there is a region of joy as well as a place of torment, and Piety and Vertue is that milky way that leads to it; a ſtate, compar'd to which the *Elyſium* of the heathen is as inconſiderable as it is fictitious, the Mahometan Paradice as flat and as inſipid as it is groſs and brutish; where

where the undertaking of the Psalmist shall be completely answer'd, those *that fear the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good*, Psalm. 34. 10. And this happy state is as accessible as excellent. God is not unsincere in his proposals, offers not these glories only to Tantalize and abuse us, but to animate and encourage mankind. He sets up an inviting prize; and not only marks out, but levels the way to it; makes that our duty which is also our pleasure, yea and our honor too. So has he contriv'd for our ease, that knowing how hardly we can divest our voluptuousness and ambition, he puts us not to it: all he demands is but that he may chuse the objects. And in that he is yet more obliging, for by that at once he refines and satisfies the desires. He takes us off indeed from the fulsom pleasures of sense, which by their grossness may cloy, yet by reason of their emtiness can never fill us; and brings us to tast the more pure spiritual delights which are the true elixir of Pleasures, in comparison whereof all the sensual are but as the dregs or feces in an extraction, after the spirits are drawn off. In like manner he calls us from an aspiring to those pinnacles of honor, where we alwaies sit tottering and often fall down, but yet invites us to soar higher, where we shall have the *moon* with all her vicissitudes and changes *under our feet*, Rev. 12. 1. and enjoy a grandeur as irreversible as splendid.

11. THUS do's he shew us a way to hallow our most unsanctified affections; thus, according to the Propheſie of *Zachariah*, *may holineſs be writ even upon the bells of the horſes*, *Zec.* 14. 20. upon our most brutal inclinations; and thus may all those feminine Passions, which now seduce women from Vertue, advance them in it. Let her that is amorous, place her love upon him who is (as the Spouse tells us, *Cant.* 5. 10.) *the chiefest among ten thousand*; she that is angry, turn her edg against her sins; she that is haughty, disdain the Devils drudgery; she that is fearful, dread him who *can destroy both Body and Soul in Hell*, *Matt.* 5. 28. and she that is sad, reserve her tears for her penitential offices. Thus may they consecrate even their infirmities; and tho they cannot Deifie, or erect Temples to them, as the Romans did to their Passions, nay their Diseases; yet after they are thus cleansed, they may sacrifice them as the Jews did the clean Beasts in the Tabernacle. Only Irreligion and Profaneness is exemt from this Priviledg, no water of Purification can cleanse it, or make it serviceable in the Temple; that like the spoils of *Jericho*, is so execrable, that it must be devoted to destruction, as *an accursed thing*, Jos. 6. 17. For tho God do's not despise the work of his own hands, hath so much kindness to his Creatures, that he endeavors to reduce all our native inclinations to their pri-

primitive rectitude; and therefore do's not abolish, but purifie them; yet Atheism is none of those; tis a counterblast from hell, in opposition to that mighty wind in which the holy spirit descended. Tho the subject in which it subsists may be reform'd, the person may turn Christian, and the wit that maintain'd its blasphemous paradoxes may be converted to holier uses: yet the quality it self is capable of no such happy Metamorphosis; that must be extirpated, for it cannot be made tributary. Which shews how transcendent an ill that is which cannot be converted to good. Even that Omnipotence which can out of the very stones raise children to *Abraham*, attemts not any transmutation of this; which ought therefore to possess all hearts with a detestation of it, and advance them in an earnest pursuit of all the parts of Piety.

12. AND that is it which I would now once more (as a farewell exhortation) commend to my female Readers, as that which vertually contains all other Accomplishments. Tis that pearl in the Gospel for which they may part with all and make a good bargain too. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*, saies the wisest of men, *Prov.* 1. 7. and by his experience he shews that it is the completing end of it too; for he no sooner declin'd from that, but he grew to dotage and dishonor. Let all those therefore to whom God

God has dispenst an outward affluence, given them a visible splendor in the eies of the world, be careful to secure to themselves *that honor which comes from God only*, Joh. 5. 44. unite their souls to that supreme Majesty who is the fountain of true honor: who in his bestowing the Crown of righteousness proceeds by the same mesures by which he dispos'd the Crown of *Israel*, when he avow'd to *Samuel* that he *lookt not on the outward appearance but beheld the heart*, Sam. 16. 7. If God see not his own Image there, all the beauty and gaiety of the outward form is despicable in his eies, like the apples of *Sodom* only a kind of painted dust. But if Piety be firmly rooted there, they then become like the Kings daughter, all *glorious within* too; a much more valuable bravery then the *garment of needle work and vesture of Gold*, Psalm. 45. 14. And this is it that must enter them into the Kings *Palace*, into that *new Jerusalem*, where they shall not wear, but inhabit *Pearls* and *Gems*, Rev. 21. 19. be beautiful without the help of art or nature, by the mere reflexion of the Divine brightness; be all that their then enlarg'd comprehensions can wish, and infinitly more then they can here imagine.

FINIS.

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